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SCENES AT BRIGHTON;

OR,

“ *HOW MUCH?* ”

A Satirical Nobel.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY INNES HOOLE, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF *SOCIETY AND SOLITUDE*, &c.

“ Satire should, like a polish’d razor keen,
Cut with an edge that’s scarcely felt or seen—
Mine is an oyster-knife.”

.....

I must have liberty
Withal, as large a charter as the wind,
To blow on whom I please: for so fools have,
And they that are most galled with my folly,
They most must laugh. SHAKESPEARE.

.....

And Horace quits a while the town for Brighton.
Horace in London.

VOL. III.



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SCENES AT BRIGHTON

CHAPTER I.

There is nothing so foolish, when you are at the expence of making an entertainment of this kind, as to order things so badly, as to let your critics and gentry of refined taste run it down; nor is there any thing so likely to make them do it, as that of leaving them out of the party.

STERNE.

FALLACIOUS hope, or whatever the poets call it, kept up the Miss Templemores' spirits till the last moment; but when they heard the various carriages begin to chase the fly-by-nights into the P—— gates, they were constrained to confess it had flown, alas!

VOL. III.

B

for

for ever. Their hearts till then had suppressed each contending emotion; but overcome with regret, they now burst forth into melancholy complaints and invectives. Their pain was equal to the pleasure—their mortification proportioned to the glory they had anticipated; and shrinking from the supercilious concern that would be manifested by their friends, they dreaded the approaching to-morrow.

They knew not that many were in the same predicament with themselves; many, more worthy of notice, if rank, birth, and fortune deserve it, get equally passed over and slighted; the lower tribes of the creation, by some odd arrangement, had usurped their station, and had thronged to the presence of one entitled to much better company. It was almost an honourable distinction the being left out of so mixed an assembly; and those who had not basked in this region

region of sunshine and folly, had the gratifying reflection instead, that they were considered *too proper* to be called in on such an occasion.

Whether we have reason on our side or no, we are all delighted with an opportunity of crowing a little over our neighbours; and with this amiable motive, Mrs. Templemore's drawing-rooms were crowded at an early hour the following morning, to the dismay and chagrin of her daughters. Many were the plans they had formed for assuming a careless indifference; but they feared a moderate share of penetration might very soon detect the imposture, and unveil their vexation to their friends.

Mrs. Tantamount was one of the number, and they soon gleaned from her discourse, that she had not been one of the elected. This was an unlooked-for consolation, and on finding one so

every way privileged had, as well as themselves, been omitted, they began to think less of the slight, and to feel reconciled almost to the consequences. The moment she was seated, she burst forth talking so loud, that no one else could be heard for her, and in so dictatorial a strain, that no one was bold enough to contradict her.

“ Ecod !” she began, “ such a crowd, such a set last night ! I understand that we have lost nothing by not being noticed—a perfect *omnium gatherum* !” here she tucked up her lip, and screwed up her eyes, to shew the contempt that she held it in—“ a perfect *omnium gatherum* !—the motive, I suppose, to shew the reigning favourite a little of common life, and, ecod, a rare specimen she has had of it ! Why, there were all the *Mrs. Dogberrys* in the place there—a due assortment of haberdashers’ daughters, setting up for new gents indeed !

deed! a vast sprinkling of Æsculapian ribs, and tag-rag to be seen in abundance! No place for a baronet's daughter, and I am thankful I made not one of the party; though, had the duke of Y—— but been there, you would not have seen me thus forgotten."

There was such a mixture of congratulatory feeling and regret in every word she uttered, that could not fail in amusing her listeners; and they soon perceived that she would very readily have bartered the one to be equally quit of the other. Mrs. Tantamount, in truth, though "a baronet's daughter," was ready to go anywhere for pleasure; and while *self* was the object for ever in her view, she was yet very happy to see it surrounded by others. With income little adequate to the indulgence of the inclination, visiting was her delight; and as she was known never to think of giving parties in return, it was surprising how she ac-

B 3 accomplished

complished it; yet Mrs. Tantamount was to be met everywhere, stunning every body by the turmoil of her tongue, and shocking by the coarseness of her diction—diction more suited to the stable of a barrack than the circle she manages to move in. It is a strange mode she takes of impressing strangers with a knowledge of her consequence and fashion; and the more *recherché* the assembly she has happened to mix with, the more *recherché* she is in *polissonnerie*. With all this, she is in her own conceit a person of the highest importance, well versed in diplomatic intrigue, and *up to* the schemes of the court—imparts to you in confidence news found in all the papers, and fatiguing family secrets known to all except yourself.

The Miss Templemores, before the morning was over, were as well acquainted with each circumstance of the gala, as though they had also been present;
and

and setting aside what they considered the *éclat* of the thing, they began to find they had lost but little in not being themselves of the party. It had been in fact nothing but Brighton *removed over the way*—the same faces, the same dresses; and though the scenery was different, the *mobility* was so great, that no one had space to enjoy it. Saving this, the economy of custom was unchanged: Mr. O'Shannon substituted his quarter-deck *hornspike* in lieu of a pastoral; sir Rollabout Useless, though blind as a beetle, was peering about for an heiress; sir Marmaduke Ptisan twirled his watchchain and seals; and the "fiddling priest" was *au-fait* at his jokes, with, as usual, nobody attending.

There are many who wish to assume the air and tone of fashion, that think they distinguish themselves more by unjust censure than by too great a facility to commend, who exaggerate every

circumstance that gives a licence to their wit, and amplify each act they may colour with contempt. This they consider raises them above the common, and they seek to impress, by the disclosure of follies which escape vulgar observation, their own wonderful discernment, and the weakness of their friends. Such as these were outrageous in their satire against the whole concern. So badly managed! so unlike what they had expected! and if this was a r——l set-out, Heaven defend them from being a ——! However, there was not much apprehension that this difficulty would ever overtake them; and though it might be very high breeding to pick holes in the coats of their neighbours, the generality were much more inclined to plume themselves on the favour conferred, than do any thing to deduct from its value.

It was this description of character that militated much against the imposed serenity

renity of the two Miss Templemores, for they felt that the praise thus lavishly bestowed was more as a vehicle to mortify them, than the genuine expressions of the heart—a boasted satisfaction, for the purpose of giving pain—an exaggerated commendation, for the pleasure of provoking. It was all this that still made them feel they had not been at the P——; and though they had always the consolation of knowing that many were in the same condition, yet they were not present to shield them from the sting of those tormenting flies that took advantage of it.

It was indeed the first opening the malicious had for gaining a superiority—a pre-eminence that they did not want for activity to improve upon, or malignancy of cunning to make the most of. As yet the Miss Templemores had flourished in every thing they had undertaken—had smoothly swam in the

B 5

stream.

stream of popular attention, and had provided no possible loophole for the envious to shoot their arrows through. Rendered implacable by former defeat, their latent animosity now raged with surprising pertinacity; unrestrained acrimony was levelled from every quarter, turpitude lay couched beneath the sympathy of pity, and deprecating comparisons were coloured with condolence.

It is in this manner the thoughtless and volatile are reminded that their path is not always to be strewn with flowers; the envious trample them away, and the thorns are left alone where the roses once concealed them. In truth, it is expecting too much from humanity, to conceive that it will let a proper season pass of having a pluck at you, without taking advantage of it; and the more superior your plumage may be, the less chance you have of retaining one feather in your cap, to shew the world what has been.

been. A decided superiority has many secret enemies to combat with—enemies that only *lash out* in private, till the tide of public favour turns, and leaves you to their mercy—*mercy* that would rather see you spinning like a chafer upon a pin, than again mounting to the station they had gladly hailed your fall from.

Mrs. Templemore soon perceived that there was more attached to the being asked to the P—— than she could possibly have had any idea of; and when she found the drift of the loungers that assailed her, she was sorry she had not exerted herself, to have rendered their malice abortive. Nothing indeed would have been more easy than to have obtained the invitation through her friends, and she found that she had fixed on a most unlucky moment for retrenching the dissipation of her daughters—dissipation that she saw was leading them to no good, but rather estranging them

from that which other measures might produce them. How could she expect men to marry her daughters, when she feared they were already tired of their faces—faces seen all the morning on the Marine Parade, and at night at every party that was open to them? Domestic pursuits were given up for idle lounging, and their whole time was squandered upon those who set little value on the enjoyment: all their ideas were wrapped up in conquest, and their judgment was only used towards directing its attainment; surrounded by flatterers, yet receiving no substantial proofs of their regard, and practising expedients, without one answering to their wishes.

Till now, Mrs. Templemore's hopes had risen and fallen with their own; but she began to see things in a clearer light, and to fear that, unless some other expedients were pursued, she had little chance of providing for her two elder daughters.

daughters. She was aware that, though surrounded by professed *admirers*, they had not a *lover* among them; and she could not but applaud the sagacity of men, for the shrewdness they evinced in the distinction. It is true, they were too beautiful not to gain universal homage; but their beauty seemed spent for the advantage of others, without gaining any good for themselves. Mrs. Templemore saw all the evil, without the strength of mind to avert it; she saw that for want of a proper reserve, they would eventually be seen with indifference—be stared at one season, neglected the next, and the third sink into oblivion. Devoid of prudence or discretion, they excited admiration, without securing esteem, and forgot, in their study to please, that it is *unconsciousness* that only gives pleasure: dress and dissipation were the employment of their days; their mornings were passed in anxious wishes for the night, and the night brought

brought forth plans of pleasure for the morning. Thus did they waste their hours, ransacking the town for new objects of delight, and cultivating schemes to perpetuate the enjoyment.

It was greivous to a mother to see how much they marred their interest—how little probability there was of attaching a rational being, whose choice would redound to their credit. She remembered her own days of youth, and the reflection made her still more discontented with her daughters; for what expectation could she form for their advancement, when they appeared so little to deserve it? Were they characters to make reasonable wives, or domestic mothers? Were they the companions a man would seek to pass his life with? Would he look to such as these to sooth and share his sorrows, or trust them with his happiness, while thus perverting all their own? Weak and fallacious was the expectation;

expectation; the blandishments of beauty can charm but for a time; it is rectitude alone that firmly links the heart.

Reflections such as these almost tempted Mrs. Templemore to think of quitting Brighton and all its frivolity; she saw that while there, it was bad policy to change the *dynasty*; and the only probability there appeared of providing for her daughters, was to remove them from a scene they had entered on so rashly. Yet how could she impress on their minds the conviction of her own? how induce them to believe that it was for their good she left the mazy round—a round that brought at every step new conquests to their feet, that seemed to want but time to fashion to their wishes? It was against all this she would have to contend, and her natural indolence shrunk from the trouble of the undertaking. With her usual inertness, therefore, things were left *to take their chance*,
and

and her daughters to get husbands, if they could, by the means they were trying to effect it.

The Miss Templemores, however, were not so blinded to their own unprofitable course as their mother had suspected; yet while they surmised the truth, they were loth to give up the pleasures they enjoyed, for the sake of the speculative chance of good more sober habits might produce them. They thought of the insipidity of solitude with horror and disgust, and their only wonder was, it had not dulled their intellects as children. To return to it again promised hopeless, endless misery, and they chased away the fear, by flying with keener relish to the amusements of the evening; but these were the fantasies of their *blue-deviled* moments. At other times, they saw a life of endless sunshine expanding wide before them; Leslie, they were sure, would never marry; and until
that

that was likely to be the case, they might suit themselves at leisure. Cecil indeed was certain she might have sir Archibald at pleasure, and Mary had equal hopes in respect to Mr. Stanley.

The story of the *on-dits* was perfectly different; they could not look calmly on at lord Mountvillars' attention to the family, without taking upon themselves to say he was certainly engaged to one of them; which this was, with many was rather doubtful; but the more envious had declared it was, in point of fact, *the heiress*.

Where there are three sisters, it is no easy matter to detect the rights of such a case; for however inclination may prompt, it is indecorous to be seen for ever wooing her you love. *Between the acts*, the sisters come in for notice, and the world are tortured to the quick, to know the *veritable Amphitryon*. It was sometimes

sometimes Cecil, sometimes Mary, and there were others who declared, they never should be surprised if that little tame thing, *the poor one*, was to catch him. Why, was not so clearly demonstrated; for though he danced alternately with the sisters, no one could take upon themselves to say they had seen him with the youngest. He talked to her sometimes, and that was all; but that was enough for the magpye parliament to pass some weighty bills upon.

The knowing people of the place had set down Mary as the heiress, for they had gleaned, by some good luck, that the money belonged to one *that had*, or *that had not*, a *surname* given her by her sponsors. This was no very satisfactory intelligence to go upon; but as drowning men will catch at straws, they took it for want of a better. *Cecil* and *Leslie* left their notions all abroad; but *Mary* was unique, and Mary was the heiress.

To

To Mary, therefore, lord Mountvillars was awarded: attentions were tortured into courtship, courtship into marriage, and the whole town faced about to attend to the proceeding.

The daughters plagued their mothers, and the mothers plagued their daughters, and how to mar the whole affair became their mutual study. Some talked of congratulating the parties, as a sure method to effect it; but others urged it might put it into their heads, if by chance it had hitherto escaped them.

Shakespeare has said, "the course of true love never did run smooth;" and many were the prayers that this instance might not mar the maxim. There were others who would not believe he had one serious thought about her; and many were bold to say, that if he had, she would soon dispel them.

Yet

Yet, in spite of all this, lord Mountvillars was constant in his attendance on the Templemores; and their friends would have burst with vexation, but from the hope that seeing them so much together, in time he would get tired of them. Stanley, Steinbach, and sir Archibald, were also subject to animadversions; but they could better afford to lose all these than part with one Mountvillars—a *spec* all the mammas had prepared themselves to pounce upon, like birds of prey to fetch him down, and lay before their daughters—daughters that were ready to cry with vexation to see him devoted to another, and stark mad with wonder that he should like such *flirty girls* in preference to themselves. Many made a point of calling on Mrs. Templemore, *to see how matters stood*, and as many made a point of staying away, to shew the indifference they felt about it.

At this juncture the gala took place
at

at the P——; and on finding that Mrs. Templemore and her daughters were not there, their malice found a vent they had not thought to look for. This was the time to trample down the objects of their envy: the young ladies took the advantage of their absence to set at lord Mountvillars with all their might; and their mothers, by dint of looks, shrugs, hems, and ahs, set to work to prejudice with all their strength. But lord Mountvillars was impenetrable to each attack: silent he stood among them all, and on the first permission to depart, took advantage of the moment, and left the crowded circle.

Nothing was now to be done but to spit their spite at the fountain-head, and Mrs. Templemore found she must take some hasty steps to counteract their invidiousness of malice. Nothing appeared so likely to prevent it as to call her friends around her, and she fixed an
early

early day to throw her rooms open to receive them. In an instant the tide of affairs was changed: her balls were too gay not to make every one anxious to attend them, and sweet smiles and sugared words were the methods used to ensure their blest attainment.

Such is the empty approbation of the world! lost by a trifle, and by a trifle bought again—a dissembling, a mean world—self, the main spring that excites it on to action—envy, the attendant curse that stimulates its malice—scandal and tittle-tattle take the place of more honourable pursuits, and cheat vacuity and indolence of the languor that attends them; honesty is at war with interest—rectitude with pleasure—dissipation, riot, and rapacity, are its mediums of delight; and friendship suffers wreck on the rock of vanity and selfishness. Refinements of palliation set it at peace only with itself, and censure, contempt,
and

and satire, are lavished on its neighbours; it joys to find them tainted with vices invidious as its own, and is industrious in discovering follies, to justify detection. Specious and artful, it shields itself by pointing out new prey to the pursuit of the censorious; then triumphs in the scheme that averts its own betrayal. Virtue and magnanimity are words to suit the poet's tale, and the worldling casts them off as weak visions of the fancy.

I write not rashly; let the world search its heart, and say this is not true? if *truth* is there, it cannot. It is no *Peter to make up the metre*, but the effervescence of the thoughts that are excited, by witnessing the perverted bent of degenerate human nature. Selfishness is now become the concomitant of humanity, malevolence and envy are abstracting it from all its better feelings, and great talent only leads it further from the perform-
ance

ance of its duty. The depraved pursuits of genius eradicate virtuous inclinations, turpitude and malice are fiends that occupy the heart, prudence is spurned because inadequate to pleasure, and pleasure is the empty toy that breaks the bonds of social justice.

CHAPTER II.

Not monkeys can be more ridiculous,
 Besides the infamy you must contract
 In the opinion of the good and wise.

SHADWELL

.....

Who would not be a wit, at so trivial a charge as that of
 suffering a little by a *corn* and a tight shoe?

Comforts of Human Life.

.....

“Hunting, with hound-like nose,
 Into that hornet’s nest, a hive of woes.”

“I DO not know a greater nuisance than
 a rainy day!” exclaimed sir Archibald
 Murray, mournfully looking from the
 windows of the Steine Library, and fix-
 ing his little black eyes intently on the
 nearest puddle, to ascertain if it still
 continued; “it spatters like the deuce,
 and it will not hold up till midnight.”
 Here he fetched a sigh, and cast a look

of mournful feeling towards the clouds. —“ Not enough even of the Anglesea blue to make an under-waistcoat, much less a pair of cossacks, for those lumberlogs, the Dutchmen. It is uncommon dull work being pent up here all day : there is no torment equal to such weather.”

“ What do you say to a tight boot ?” asked captain Auckland, hitting his heel as he spoke against the floor, and wincing with the agony of endeavouring to shift the posture of the part afflicted ; “ what do you say to Hoby’s true touch, with a *nutmeg* packed up as a passenger ?”

“ Boil it as the pilgrim did his peas,” said Stanley, looking for a moment from his paper.

“ Oh ! take a hint from Aaron and Moses,” observed another, “ and carve away, as they threatened to do their ugly Jewish noses.”

“ My plan,” interrupted Lovelace, “ is
as

as Moses said to Aaron, that is, as they are so much *the go*, the best plan is to wear them."

"You are talking poetry as Moliere's *bourgeois gentilhomme* did prose, without knowing it," said Auckland, and he tried to laugh, but it would not do; the pain made him sick at heart, and hopping across the shop, he sat down by the side of Stanley. Again he hit his heel against the floor, and again his lip was bit with agony.

"The fellow has stuffed you in as tight as a pellet in a pop-gun," said Stanley; "and, egad! if I was you, I would draw the ramrod out, and shoot him. 'Shoot, great rusty-fusty, shoot; such *narrow soles* as his deserve your indignation."

"Kick at him *to boot*," said sir Archibald, almost in fits with the *éclat* of having squeezed out a pun—"kick at him *to boot*, I say." He could not bear the probability of its being lost, and

again he repeated—" Kick at him *to boot*."

" *Pshoo, pshoo!*" said his friend; " he may *wax* wroth now, but his anger will not *last*; and though he *bristles* up, it will *all* be *healed* over in a minute."

" What a *cobbled* set of puns!" said a young ensign who joined the party, " though, if I had made as many, I should be as pleased—as pleased as *Punch*."

" Can you *mend* them?" asked Stanley.

" That is not *brad*," said sir Archibald, trying to slur over the *r*. " Another pun, 'pon my soul! and I think I have had the last of them," and again he was quite hysterical with the satisfaction it produced him.

" My *pump* has long been dry," said Lovelace; " and unless you just allow me to look in at Thunder's, to refresh my *understanding*, you will get no more from me. I am at the last *extremity*, and am positively as heavy as a *lap-stone*."

This

This nonsense only passed a very few moments of their time; there were still many hours to dinner, and how to *get them under* seemed to baffle their invention. The groans of Auckland and his boot were echoed by sir Archibald about the weather. Stanley had read every word in the papers, from their respective names down to that of the printers. Lovelace twirled round the rowel of his spur till he had cramped his leg, and fretted his finger; and the little ensign had nearly nibbled off the thumb of his glove, lost in pleasing reveries of Cecil Templemore.

Thus did four *intellectual* beings seek to pass the time, watching its lapse with gladness, feeling a weight of care removed at the end of every hour, yet languishing under the pressure of those they knew were still to come.

How many thousands are there who
wake in the morning only to wish for
c 3 night

night—who take up a book, because they cannot think, and throw it down again, because beyond their comprehension—who fly from the dread of solitude to companions whose society gives no pleasure, and who plunge into vice and riot, because it lessens the tediousness of lassitude; passing their mornings in drowsy longings for the night, their nights in frantic follies that unfit them for the morning! Fatigued by the vacuity of their minds, they fly to frivolous avocations, and seek rather *tuer le tems*, than rationally to spend it.

“Go it,” said Lovelace, watching a drop of rain down a pane of glass of the window at which they were standing; “I match this against that, and, two to one, he has it.”

Sir Archibald caught at the pastime —“I will back this against you,” naming another drop. “See how the fellow splits it!”

“Done!”

“Done!” was uttered, and the bets ran high; the drops came in *neck and neck*, and another heat must take place to decide it. The spectators were excited to perfect rapture, and the opponents again eagerly selected their horses.

The drops started fair from the top, and went a few paces with equal advantages. Lovelace's then made a stand, and the odds ran high against him.

“Twenty to one!” said sir Archibald.

“Ram them along!” said Lovelace, and again the race turned in his favour. His was seen creeping along in a straight current, while the other took a zigzag motion.

Sir Archibald wrung his hands in agony, clicked his tongue against his teeth, and moved about his legs, as though in the act of spurring. By a

lucky transition, his again got the start ; a large drop behind sent it rapidly on, and it bid fair to distance its competitor.

Lovelace rattled about his sword, as though to terrify dame Fortune once more to shew him favour ; but all would not do ; his racer bored cursedly on hand, while the other was making a regular descent towards the goal.

“ You are dished, my boy—you are dished !” said Auckland, who had quite forgotten his pain in his anxiety for his friend—“ queered ! floored ! ’pon my soul ! fixed on the wrong cattle ! Why, the statue at Charing-cross would trot it along better. How stands the odds ? They will nick you of the Spanish ; you will bleed——”

“ A cool fifty for this damned folly !” said Lovelace, in a surly tone, turning about as he spoke, as though all hope was ended.

At

At this moment sir Archibald's *bit of blood* stopped; had a pin fallen, they might have heard it. It stopped *about an inch above its final destination*, while Lovelace's, seeming to profit by the delay, began to collect with diligence all the little tributary bubbles which lay in its way, rapidly run on with miraculous celerity, and reached the end of its labours.

Sir Archibald looked thunderstruck, while Lovelace spun about the shop like a top; he had won above a hundred pounds, and he began to plan how he should spend it.

"Turn out an entire new suit," said Auckland, who, notwithstanding the penalty he paid in the pain of his foot, could yet think of nothing but dress; "turn out an entire new suit, new gold lace, instead of turning the old, and buy a true Damascus blade to put in your best scabbard."

“While I,” said sir Archibald in a whisper to Stanley, “had best go and purchase a halter, or petition for the old sword to cut my throat with.”

“What do you say to the *altar* and Cecil Templemore?”

“A deuced deal more than to the halter and the sword. I will propose to her to-morrow—make myself uncommon forcible to-night—try to get out *how much* she goes for, and write a letter to say I will have her.”

At this moment lord Mountvillars and colonel Clanmaurice entered the library; the latter just returned from Ireland, and beating round at every quarter to get a ticket for Mrs. Templemore’s ball. The gentlemen took advantage of it, and hoisting their umbrellas, lord Mountvillars, Stanley, colonel Clanmaurice, and sir Archibald, departed to make in person the application.

“Well,

“ Well, I must say,” observed Mary to her sister the morning of their ball—
“ I must say that things have turned out much better than I possibly could have expected. Nothing is so pleasant as a party at home, and I know mamma would never have thought of it had we been to the P——.”

“ I grant you it is better *now*,” said Cecil, “ for the pleasure is to come, while whatever delight we might have experienced there would only exist in our remembrance. How spiteful the people have been about it ! but I will indulge myself in the revenge to-night of not finding partners for their ugly daughters ; it is quite fair to retaliate.”

“ Oh ! quite fair,” returned Mary, “ if our party does not suffer from it ; but nothing makes a ball go off so well as the managing to set all the frights dancing ; they are so delighted,” mimicking them as she spoke, “ it is all so pleasant, and they all danced every dance.

Not very profitable employ for the gentlemen ; but they manage so generally to please themselves, that it has at least the charm of novelty."

"The difficulty is to make them do it," said Cecil, yet agreeing to the justness of the statement ; "for there are some such rebels at any control, that it is vain to endeavour to attempt it ; these make me so angry, I hate even to ask them again, and a poor lamb who is ready to suffer, makes my heart ache in inflicting the sacrifice. These are some of the drawbacks in the delights of a party at home ; for my part, I like to go abroad for pleasure."

"As to *drawbacks*," said Mary, repeating her words, "you may find them everywhere, if you choose to look after them ; but having it so much in one's power to do as one likes at home, I think they are as thinly scattered there as anywhere. It is a great thing being able to look in the glass till the last moment,
and

and to begin the evening without the fever of supposing that the wind has distorted your hair to the shape of a fury's. I pity the poor girls to-night, for this rain will be sadly against them; I know what it is to have one's head hammered with an umbrella, flattening it down in some parts, and the points dragging it out in others."

Cecil laughed at her whimsical description—"That is bad enough, in truth," she replied, "and is almost an equivalent to the troubles one finds at home, having to sit for an hour entertaining the first people who come, looking so wild and scared at finding themselves so premature, yet too covetous to have *enough of it* to stay away till a decent hour. Oh, the horror of the first knock, which, at a fair reckoning, breaks in upon one at least an hour before it is expected! then the rush that takes place to light a creditable number of candles, to avoid the card-tables, and to clamber

clamber up to the chandeliers, running against each other, and sure to attempt to light the wrong; for it is but an attempt at best, for though you cover them with the blaze, the wicks choose to remain unignitable. The result is, you burn your fingers instead of the candle, throw down the consuming paper in a fit of despair, and tremble as though you had been committing murder, when called upon to receive your friends. Then, to see them stare and glour about, counting the card-tables, the number of candles which the servant is taking in hand—how many new packs of cards, and how many old ones—peering all over one's dress, as though they meant to get every article by heart—talking all sorts of tittle-tattle, because they think they are obliged to talk, and drinking so much coffee, that you fear there will be none left for any body else."

" Oh, what a true picture !" said Mary, laughing at the caricature her sister

sister had drawn. "He best can paint them who has felt them most." I think, Cecil," she continued, "we must publish a new set of the Miseries of Human Life, and have this to begin with."

"It would take a long summer's day," rejoined Cecil, "to get to the end of them, for old Testy was placidity's self compared to you, and Sensitive's nerves *dough*, compared to mine."

"I think things affect us more than they used," said Mary, her thoughts at the same time *trying back* to past days; "either the times or ourselves are changed; for what we once considered trifles, now take the colour of vexations of the greatest magnitude."

"It is the aggregate of trifles that constitute our trouble," said Cecil, talking more rationally than she was aware of, "and I cannot set down those things as *trifles*, that so sensibly, so tenderly, affect us. What can be a greater nuisance than when you are singing a well-known air that you have selected for the display

display of your graces, for a girl to come up to you who knows something of the tune, and who good-temperedly begins to go through it with you, not understanding a word about a second, but following in the same notes close upon you, till she finds herself quite *au fait* at it, and then begins just to gallop on a note or two before you, the mamma all the while looking her applause, and smilingly pointing out the *good notion the dear child has of music*."

"You will never forget that," said Mary, interrupting her, "and I do not think you have spoken a civil word to Mrs. Day since."

"Why, was it not enough to provoke a saint? I never was so mad in my life, and I have made a memorandum never to sing again till I have first ascertained there are no children in the room—so provoking!"

"Oh! doleful—doleful indeed!" returned Mary, "and nothing can explain how I pitied you. I knew how it
would

would be before you began, and I did every thing I could that might warn you of it."

"Then," said Cecil, who seemed labouring with the recollection of another *misery*, "then what could be more enraging than the affair that happened the other night?"

"I am tired of talking of the P——," said Mary, interrupting her.

Cecil smiled—"I do not mean *that*," she said, "of miseries the *ne plus ultra*; when we attack that, it must have a day to itself. I am recounting what are termed the *minor* miseries; and if these *are* the minor, Heaven defend me from the major!"

"*Major* Steinbach?" asked Mary.

"Nonsense!" replied Cecil, hastily returning to her old subject. "What, I say, could be more vexing than the affair the other night at Mrs. Parkland's? After having indefatigably attended all her stupid parties, nicely *picked out* in
our

our best, from the fallacious idea they might be gay, and never finding them any thing worth the wear and tear, think that we should at last resolve to go in the shabby things we did, discovering, too late to remedy the evil, that the party was composed of our heart's best darlings !”

“ And all our *Mrs. Grundies* there !” interrupted Mary ; “ I never was so mortified in my life ! I had on second-rate gloves—second-rate flowers, ugly tumbled things—and a *brute* of a frock, fit for nothing else but the rag-bag.”

“ Fancy me then,” said Cecil, smiling in spite of her troubles—“ fancy me, and my odious-painted trimming, so vulgar ! so the appearance of trying to look smart!—those glaring red roses—nothing men hate so much ; and then my satin shoes, dirty as the ground, crossed all over with scarlet ribbon—every one seeing, all the time, the intention was to make them look clean, and quizzing me,
no

no doubt, for the failure of my expectation. I never was so glad as when the evening was over, to escape from such a world of tribulation !”

“ A world so full of miseries,” added Mary, “ that one meets with them at every turn ! I am sure one could run up a book of them in a minute. More of the miseries. *Talking of shoes*, as Caleb Quotem says, after having squeezed your feet into a pretty little pair of satin slippers, and are as proud as possible of their appearance, find that on performing the first quadrille, the poor pent-up prisoners have liberated themselves from their torture by bursting out at the sides—no others to replace them with, but those the *proper* size for your feet, which clearly explain to your mortification the cause of the mishap with the others.”

“ There is no end to them !” said Cecil, sickening with their very recollection. “ Such a book as that would be a diary of one’s days—would be too true a tale
to

to be perused with satisfaction, furnished out of the tortures of cross events, and established on the untoward vagaries of Fate—vagaries that in time will make one's temper as crooked as themselves. I will begin with Monday.—Miserable the first. In a party of pleasure, declaring that riding in any of the close carriages, had in requisition for the occasion, will bring on a headache, for which you feel yourself very conveniently predisposed, hoping by this manœuvre to get placed in a curricule or cabriolet; then find yourself, by the officious care of some of the sly old *chaperons*, mounted, in spite of yourself, on the coachbox, by the side of an old fat coachman, who has lived in the family a hundred years, and who thinks he may presume upon it to talk to you, and do all in his power to make the ride "*greeable like*"—the cattle and the coach as fubsy as himself; and while you see all the rest of the party flying past you on the wings of speed, you and
your

your hopeful set crawl along the road at leisure, stopping every moment to clog the wheel in going down hill, and to rest the horses after coming up, while you are praying all the time, without any prospect of the sort, that the one would take fire, or the others run away with you, as the only likely means to rid you of the misery."

"You managed that very badly," interrupted Mary, "very badly indeed, and I prophesied you would. Why could you not have gone on horseback?"

"What, to have been paired off with major Steinbach? No, no; I had set my heart on the cabriolet, and but for that old marplot, Mrs. Mason, should, without a doubt, have accomplished my purpose. I hate parties of pleasure," she continued; "they never go off well; every one grows discontented with the failure of some scheme, and then they indemnify themselves by plaguing their companions. Oh! there is nothing so hopeless

less as an arrangement of the sort. The call there is on you to be talkative and gay, soon scares away all the faculties to effect it—not wishing to be silent, yet thinking in vain of something apt to say—feeling angry with those who in some way have annoyed you, and vexed with yourself in being so readily annoyed.”

“The way to meet with pleasure,” observed Mary, “is, I believe, never to expect it. Our brightest rays of joy are always kindled by an unexpected spark; therefore nothing can be more hopeless than a premeditated scheme of merriment. People are brought together whose feelings towards each other are those of cat and dog, all jostling one against the other, and all failing, individually and collectively, in obtaining the end of their desires.”

“I should say that *you* had no room for uttering complainings of the sort,” said Cecil, with a look of inquiry, which
at

at the same time put the question—"you had no fat coachman puffing at your side, but the graceful lord Mountvillars?"

Mary sighed, and then replied—"More graceful, I grant you, than your portly charioteer, but not one-half so pleasant. Leslie, I think, makes every body silent; for we rode, I assure you, the whole ten miles without scarcely uttering a word."

"Well, but you could talk?"

"And so I did, to the hedge-rows and trees, as we passed them; no one else attended; and though 'stones may have ears, and trees may not be dumb,' it was but dull work, and I soon grew tired of the colloquy."

"Was the man asleep, or composing an offer of marriage?"

"Asleep, I should have thought," returned Mary, "but for a circumstance that contradicted it. Leslie's horse, by some chance, started, so unexpectedly, that she had nearly lost her seat. In an instant

instant he was off his horse by her side, looking so anxious and so pale. I never saw a man so frightened in my life; his nerves must be very weak, for I cannot say I saw much room for danger."

"And after this I suppose you got on better?"

"No, not a bit. He was excited but for a moment, then sunk again to his former taciturnity. I assure you I longed more than once to be in the tilbury by the side of Stanley."

Cecil laughed archly at her sister, and then again commenced the miseries.—"Tuesday—let me see. Oh! it's measure full of woes!" Again there was a mischievous smile playing on her cheek—"Fastening the ringlets, which lend their aid towards decorating your head—fastening them in, I say, so lightly, that they may have the appearance of nature; then finding that in performing *les graces à merveille to a turn*, that you
have

have left a few of them hanging to the buttons of your partner's sleeve, who has not held his arm up high enough to allow you to perform with impunity the evolutions so hostile to art."

The two sisters for a moment smiled without speaking, which at length Mary interrupted, as, blushing a deep red with the recollection, she said—"Oh, Cecil! I hate to hear its very mention. My only comfort is, that I think no one perceived them but yourself. My flowers all came out with them; therefore they were not so obvious, and if they had been seen, I cannot but fancy that ere this some *kind considerate friend* would have made me understand it: folks are not too good-tempered on these occasions."

"Indeed they are not," said Cecil, in a tone that would not have disgraced a testy; "the world is too replete with wit and wickedness to let such an advantage escape them—of too ingeni-

ous, too industrious a turn not to accommodate such a personal embarrassment as that to the ridicule of mirth and of malice. A thing of the kind once happened here."

"Not exactly," interrupted Mary; "the lady you allude to lost her *wig*, which is too harsh a cognomen for mine."

Cecil smiled at the distinction, and continued—"Your misfortune is certainly nothing in the scale with hers; she, poor woman! kept her house for a month, and when she came out, the subject was fresh as ever, and the poor *Absalom* was quizzed from all quarters—quizzed for a whole season, and then, when the next came round, some idle wasp put it in verse, and it appeared in the county paper."

"Such things would almost make one forswear the world," said Mary, sighing; "a world that preys like a pike on the fish that swim around it. In nothing are you safe from its animadversions, particularly

particularly when you provoke it; *firts* are a rare morsel!"

She looked towards her sister, who replied—"The *mercenary* equally palatable."

There was a pause for a moment, which Mary playfully interrupted by saying—"A perfect prototype of *Mrs. Foresight* and *Mrs. Frail*."

Cecil saw the resemblance, laughed, and Mary continued—"Throwing stones, with houses made of glass"—oh, Cecil, Cecil! in these words, since we are both wounded, let us do what is often done in duels—take care of one another, and grow better friends than ever."

This little insurrection put an end to the *miseries*, and they left their apartment together.

CHAPTER III.
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There is a species of minor wit which is much used, and much more abused; I mean raillery. It is much safer to let it quite alone than to play with it; and yet almost every body do play with it, though they see daily the quarrels and hearthburnings that it occasions.

CHESTERFIELD.

EVERY THING began to give signs of the *blow-out* to take place in the evening, for every one was lending their aid towards promoting the general cause of what is emphatically called *turning the house out of window*. The chairs and tables were already dislodged from the drawing-rooms, to make way for the live lumber that were soon to occupy their station; the carpet was up, and the housemaid, on all fours, in one part, scrubbing away with all her fury.

Mrs.

Mrs. Templemore and Leslie were arranging some greenhouse plants in large ornamental baskets, when the two young ladies entered. These were an agreeable surprise to them, and they were some time before they could express the delight it gave them.

“We only want the floor chalked,” continued Cecil, “to make it a perfect paradise. I wish we could have it done.”

“While you are about it,” said Mrs. Templemore, dryly, “why not increase the wish to coloured lamps, transparencies, and wreaths of fancy flowers? just as likely to come to pass, and equally easy to pay for them.”

Cecil looked rather angry, for she could bear ridicule from every body better than when it was coupled with the sarcastic manner of her mother. She was silent, and was walking away to hide the feeling, when Leslie affectionately prevented her, saying—“Let me be the

sprite to realize your wishes. No doubt lamps are to be procured; and if they are, dear Cecil, you shall have them."

"May I, mamma?"

Mrs. Templemore kissed her cheek, for there was a winning sweetness in her tone never to be resisted.

"But the chalked floor?" said Mary; "no one here, I think, professes the sort of thing, and without that, to my idea, other ornaments are superfluous."

"Why cannot we do it ourselves?" asked Cecil, eyeing the dimensions of the room as she spoke. "A border round the space set apart for the quadrilles is quite sufficient, and we could accomplish it in no time. A side and an end for you, Mary, and the same for me—a trifle, that would be finished in the space of an hour!"

"Pray tell the servant to be ready with her pail to wipe off your folly when  
you

“you are tired of it,” said Mrs. Templemore, “for I reckon you will only destroy the order of the room before you readily dispense with the labour.”

“There is no labour, mamma, in scrawling a border of——” Again her eye measured the room——“of about fifty yards at farthest.”

Leslie interrupted her——“Not fifty yards, Cecil, for I shall be delighted to lessen the number.”

“How? You cannot draw.”

“Try me,” she said, “and you shall see I will perform my task with the hands of a cunning workman.”

The room was soon measured out, and with great dexterity they began their occupation. Leslie’s portfolio furnished them with *Arabesque* patterns, and every thing promised to answer their expectations.

“With what various feelings the light fantastic toe will efface our morning’s labour!” said Mary, moralizing for a moment as she slackened in her task.

“The *toe*,” said Cecil, “seems to me to have but one feeling; you have advanced your statement wrongly.”

Mary smiled and continued—“I mean, how different the hopes and fears that inhabit various bosoms! some bounding along, light as the joyous visions that entrance them, others assuming the semblance of joy, to cheat them of their troubles.”

“I never found dancing do them any good,” said Cecil, working away with all her power, “for however swift you may skip along, they are sure to overtake you; yet I believe there are many who hide, under shadows of joy, the substance they have in their sorrows.”

Leslie looked towards her sisters; but  
perceiving

perceiving they had forgotten any one was present but themselves, she again busied herself in her labour.

“ I wonder if we shall have all our friends to-night ?” asked Cecil, after a silence of some moments.

“ All, no doubt,” returned Mary ; “ our friends convenient, friends agreeable, and friends elegant ; the whole lot of them, take my word for it.”

“ How do you so define them ?” asked Cecil. “ I know none that in any way act up to your distinction.”

“ The first class,” continued Mary, “ are those who administer to our necessities—so disagreeable in every other light, that we should certainly discard them if we knew how to get on without them. In the *corps dramatique* they would be called *chorus-singers*—in the *corps de ballet*, *figurantes*, and with us watering-place people they are the *ballast* that keep our pleasure-boats from  
D 5                      upsetting.

upsetting. The object to be desired in a party is a crowd: Chesterfield terms it a *mob*; this mob must be procured, for the not having room to sit, stand, or breathe, gives a gala prodigious distinction. Providing *picked men* for these occasions is impracticable, and thus, as every dog is sure to have his day, the halt, the lame, and the blind, are had in to fill up the crevices—are brought forward as foils for the meteors of society, a deeply-shaded mass, to contrast their *foreground* fascination.”

“ You talk like a *tailor*,” said Cecil, “ that is, much more than you work; but pray continue, for I am anxious to come to the *friends agreeable*.”

“ Were I to humour you, Cecil, I should name the *little ensign*; but, in my conscience, I cannot admit him; he is a puppy—a decided dandy, which, of all the disgusting animals that infest society, is certainly the most contemptible—exhausting all his talents in the cut and the



the set of his coat, and exchanging respect and consideration for the gewgaws of notoriety."

"I presume," said Cecil, "you are clearing the course for Stanley; but there are too many blots in his escutcheon for him to be received *nemine contradicente*. You have provoked me to take up arms, and now hear me cry down your magpie."

Mary seemed much more diverted than annoyed, and Cecil continued—"A creature made up of mischievous prattle—prattle, which, in whatever light we view it, vanity appears the predominant figure on the canvas, while in the background are seen sneering satire, growling censure, restless petulance, grinning ridicule, and frowning contempt."

Mary laughed outright, and Cecil, more petulant than ever, continued—"He is a man who fondly conceives he possesses such fascinating powers of conversation, that every one must listen to

him with rapture, and thinks he is court-  
ed for the special purpose of entertaining,  
which he effects by retailing anecdotes  
twenty times repeated, and by cutting  
foolish puns that would disgrace a village  
jester. Then he has a trick of indulging  
in what he would term *pleasantry*, that  
is, to sketch with the pencil of sarcasm  
the features of each of his friends, in  
which every foible is unhesitatingly  
dragged to view, to raise a momentary  
laugh, and to gratify his own ambition;  
he is fonder of displaying the frailties  
than the virtues of his fellow-creatures,  
and their vices are exposed to view to  
furnish food for his whimsicality. He  
is a man whom neither reproof nor  
praise, admonition nor persuasion, defeat  
nor victory, can induce to hold his  
tongue—an indulgence that makes him  
more ridiculous than either you or him-  
self seem aware of. Destitute of judg-  
ment, yet loquacious on every subject,  
and whether competent or not, the world  
would

would end if he did not speak, when, not content with giving an opinion, he permits the most irrelevant ideas that are jumbled together freely to obtrude themselves, which prove him unacquainted with systems while launching into science, and that he is trusting to an active genius to make up for want of information. Thus deficient, he speaks on every topic advanced; but, like the mercenary troops of an enemy, his shallow endowments seldom cooperate with each other. They do not support with energy the common cause, and every new accession of ideas, for want of stamina, are like undisciplined recruits, who exhibit an appearance of power without being in any ways formidable. Ambition is his besetting sin—a morbid ambition, that not only teaches him to rival his competitors in grinning like a clown through a collar, but tempts him to the risk of attaching a heart that is more fitly sued by his betters.”

“As

“As far as rank and riches go,” interrupted Mary; “for if you mean lord Mountvillars, in nothing else do I see the superiority; and to tell you the truth, I like Stanley over and over again a thousand times in preference to his lordship.”

Leslie started from her knees; the chalk fell from her hands, and clasping them together, in a piercing tone of joy she exclaimed—“Heaven be praised! powers of mercy, I am thankful!”

“Thankful for what?” asked her sisters, suddenly moving round to observe her. “You look quite animated, Leslie! What on earth has possessed you?”

She had again placed herself in her former posture, and in a hesitating tone she said, as she again resumed her employment—“I am thankful, because I have just turned the corner.”

She said this with many intermissions of speech, but which again grew animated as she proceeded—“I am thankful,” she

she added, her eyes glistening as she spoke—"I am thankful that one care, one anxiety, is put an end to."

There was more meant than met the ear, but her sisters took it in its literal sense, and congratulating her on the superior progress she had made to themselves, they again left her to prosecute her labours undisturbed.

"As we do not seem to agree," continued Mary, "in our ideas of the *agreeable*, shall I turn to the description of our *friends elegant*?"

Cecil gave an ungracious assent, and Mary again for a moment was silent. At length she said, returning once more to the old bone of contention—"It seems to me, Cecil, that you have abused Stanley for the very talent you excel in yourself, for I must say I never heard him cut up any one so dexterously as he has now been dissected at your hands;  
yet

yet surely to make your friends laugh is a very innocent employment, and though, like epicures, nothing will go down now but highly-seasoned dishes, is the poor cook therefore to be blamed because he makes them to their fancy? Raillery and scandal are now the components essential towards promoting polite conversation; they are the very fashion of the day; therefore let those be reprobated, who, by giving it such countenance, contribute to the snares they fall into themselves. It is they must answer for the sin who make it—not he who for the fashion takes it; begging Butler's pardon for the parody."

"Your position is satisfactory to a superficial glance," said Cecil, "and it is arguments such as these that tend to encourage the evil—that strengthen the perversions of vivacity, and help to increase the corruptness of the human heart. With such a reservation, the tongue runs riot, reason is hoodwinked  
by

by the flashes of *esprit*, and, like the poor toad, harassed and wounded by the harrow, the individual suffers for the frolic of his friends. Thus the barriers of society are broken down, and we blush not to be amused by the frailties of our neighbours, forgetful that while we laugh at the mutilated character of another, the freedom should make one tremble for the safety of ourselves. I do not like scandal," continued Cecil, "and I hope I never shall; for notwithstanding, Mary, you soften it down to *modern good-breeding*, I must think, with justice Woodcock, that it is of much more affinity with *old-fashioned impudence* than the times are ready to allow."

"You seem," interrupted Mary, "not a little out of humour with these said times; what more have they done to perplex you? I shall not be surprised to see you turn hermit some of these days, and moan out your cares in a wood."

"No, no," returned Cecil; "a wood  
is

is too dull a scene for me. If I turn hermit, it will be an opposition *Hermit in London*. It is no use to be at the trouble of *making the sage*, unless you have those round you to plague with your sarcasms. Owls may talk to kings; but I fear they would be stupid companions for me."

"In truth," said Mary, "I believe the world contrives to come up to your criterion of delight, however you may measure its iniquity; and when you consider that we are placed here among so many good things, it is neither to be wondered at that we scramble to attain them—that we are fertile in expedients to secure scantlets of happiness, or that we are dexterous in artful strivings to appropriate substantial blessings. But these studies are too abstruse—these disquisitions too profound for me," she continued, jumping up from her recumbent posture, and twirling a few pirouettes in the centre of their employment. "My back is



is as bent as a rainbow, and it will cost me more pain to resume the straight line than it did to accommodate its form to our labours. I wish we had completed it."

"And I too, with all my heart," said Cecil, resting on her elbows.

"It will be highly amusing to-night," continued Mary, "to see the curious *pas* and *faux pas* that will tread our magic circle; some so gravely dodging it in and out, others grinning all the time, to shew the little pains it cost them; then to see the girls manœuvring to get fresh partners! There is nothing so amusing as to watch the policy of a ball-room; some breathless with exertion, others with anxiety, yet all frisking about to the same tune that is expected to lighten their labours."

"But what is to lighten ours, Mary, if you continue to play truant?"

"One more pirouette, and I have done. Let me just shew you how captain

tain Auckland dances—a perfect pitchfork set in motion, his feet always maintaining the same distance apart, while he chassee his body at random.”

No one could resist laughing at her caricature, and after one or two more imitations, she again knelt down and resumed her employ.

“ I wonder if dancing will ever go out of fashion ?”

“ Till people take as much pleasure in cultivating their *heads* as they now do their *heels*, certainly never.”

“ I hope it never will,” again rejoined Mary, “ for a ball-room is my delight ; it gives one the opportunity of enjoying a *tête-à-tête*, without encroaching in the least on the scrupulous attention to propriety fastidious decorum has established.”

“ I have heard a ball-room termed,” said Cecil, “ a *market of love*—a sort of  
*Cupid's*

*Cupid's Royal Exchange—a Matrimonial Lottery-Office——*

“Where, as is the custom in those speculations,” interrupted Mary, “a hundred blanks are turned up to one prize. Who do you intend dancing with to-night?”

“You might as well ask me,” said Cecil, “*who do you intend to marry?* for the answer would be the same—any body that asks me. What are your plans?”

“To spirit lord Mountvillars into making proposals. His attentions are too obvious, I am sure, not to keep others off; so it is but fair that I should turn them to some advantage. To judge from his actions, a very little will do it; and my only wonder is, that he should go so far as he does without giving me one reason to believe that he ever intends to go further; but a ball-room often settles these things in a minute—things that would take whole ages of common life to

to bring about. Leslie, you look tired," continued Mary, anxiously regarding her sister; "this tiresome freak of ours is too much for you. One moment you look as white as the chalk you are using, and the next—look how red she has turned!" addressing Cecil.

"What are we to do?" asked Cecil, in something like a *fuss*; "what shall we do if we all get tired? There is now nearly three yards to do, and it is almost four o'clock. I wish we had not begun it, for mamma will never cease laughing at us, should we not be able to get it done."

At this moment a knock was heard at the door, and before they had time to deny themselves, the party of gentlemen from Donaldson's were ushered into the room.

The Miss Templemores were somewhat confused at being caught in so servile

vile a situation ; but the admiration their work excited soon set them quite at ease, and they were not at all sorry for the interruption, as their visitors offered to finish the border for them, as a return for their being admitted.

Much amusement ensued in establishing them with the proper quantities of chalk, and in shewing them the use of the pattern ; but their industry ceased with the novelty of the thing, and in a short time Leslie was the only one true to her undertaking. Cecil and Mary were delighted in again meeting with colonel Clanmaurice, and all recollection of the necessity of completing their task vanished with the sight of him.

Colonel Clanmaurice was a man of about thirty—a *Paddy*, and possessing a better fortune than many of his countrymen can lay claim to ; but, as they are proud of saying, their money is *neither*

*ther here nor there*, for they are too agreeable not to be very well received without it; and if they are not born with the silver spoon in their mouths, it is their own faults if they do not place it there before they die.

The peculiarity of the Irishman's character is eminently flattering to women, for though they can at will assume the proper port of a Hercules, their pleasure is to become the slave of Omphale; not *one* Omphale, but twenty such; the more the merrier, while, "ah! on my soul, they're in love with them all."

It is a well-known fact, that women universally prefer their society to that of any other men; they are better acquainted with the modes of pleasing, their manners are more animated and *striking* (I mean no national reflection), and they flatter with more facility, and trifle with more grace. The Irishman  
lives

lives in pleasure, and his pleasure is to please; and while the ardour and ductility of his character render him too attractive to women, they are lulled into forgetfulness of the temporary and time-serving passion that brings him a slave to their feet; and though their eyes may be perfectly open to the national inconsistency of the character, every woman believes her own lover constant, till she finds herself betrayed, and she then adds another feather to his cap of acknowledged conquest, by joining the hue-and-cry against him. Their flint and steel particles are sure to kindle flame, and women's hearts take fire and consume like tinder before them. Blinded by the flashes of their wit, they will not think they ever can betray, and forget to expect, from the facility of the attachment, that it promises an equal facility to any other whose charms may put in for a claim. By nature endowed with wit, and of brilliant and shining qualities,

they freely emit the sparks of gaiety kindled by the collision of society—their natural conviviality leads them to the love of wine, and wine helps to increase their natural love for women.

Colonel Clanmaurice was all this and more—was every thing by turns, and nothing long—a *bon vivant*, *un homme d'esprit*, *un gallant homme*, *et un homme gallant*; and what embraces all these in their most extensive sense, he was what the English designate by the term of *a damned good fellow*—a term that has been analysed, and found to convey the opinion of every thing that is bad. Be that as it may, the colonel's society was universally courted: he owed his birth to Ireland, and nothing more; and he thought from that he was licensed to abuse it as much as he pleased: he hated the place, and never went near it, but when prompted by self-interest, to coax and caress an old rich uncle, who promised



mised to increase his worldly possessions by the bequest of his own. He had just existed a sufficient time in the land of *potatees*, to imbibe a nate touch of the accent—would invariably substitute the *o* for the *a*—designate every thing by the term *hondsme* that pleased him, and tell you, with all the lightheartedness of his country, how *shuperfluous* were the *trobblings* of care; yet he had no idea that he carried the signs of the country that gave him birth—hated the brogue more than he could possibly express, and would as soon think of saying he liked *staggering 'bob*, as that he patronized the sweet pea-whiskey. He had indeed no respect for the green isle of Erin—an unworthy member, who quizzed the community to any one that would listen to him.

He had just given Stanley a whimsical account of its economy, swearing at the same time he could not wonder at the

dislike the frogs and toads had to inhabit it, and declaring that when once the old gentleman was a *bit of stiff*, nothing should ever tempt him to sojourn in the place again.—“ Now to give you the least taste in the world of it,” he continued, “ I will divide the *cratures* into three classes, and then you will have them all before you, in that broth of a city, Dublin. There are the inhabitants of the first floor, the natives of the parlour, and the aborigines of the kitchen. In the first floor, they are all promise without performance, good humour and grandeur, claret and complaisance; in the parlour, they are oaths and ostentation, bronze and blarney, wit and whiskey; and in the kitchen, rags and rudeness, stench and stupidity, dirt and dram-drinking. Och! and then the gentle walk you have to take across the water! women squeaking—bilge-water shifting—ship rolling—waves dashing, and all in a comfortless state of unsettlement,

as

as to what troubles may come to us next."

He had an odd manner with him, that never failed to procure him hearers, and seeing the attention he had excited, he continued—"Then you should have seen the scrape a poor couple got into, who were coming *to this* to be married: bigamy among the brutes goes for nothing; and but for the blunder of having got into the same ship that contained his wife, who was on her travels to look after him, every thing would have gone off well.—'A gale of wind shortly,' says the captain, who was *awake* to the rock they had split on.—'Heaven forbid!' said I.—'There is sure to be a breeze, at any rate,' he returned, 'for we have a termagant they little dream of down in the steerage.' At this moment the rolling of the vessel caused the fair Statira to come on deck for a little fresh air, and then began the din of arms, and, oh gods, how they did fight! Notwithstanding

my sufferings, mental and corporal, from danger and delay, I could not help lending a curious eye to the marvellous conflict. Understand me rightly—I did not literally lend an eye to either of the combatants, only figuratively; for if I had, it would have returned to its owner, like pots, kettles, and saucepans, much blacker than when first borrowed. Och! he was a bold man, for he sought to marry two wives, and he fought with them with equal valour and intrepidity. How they wrestled! then they bruised, and when they could not vent their spite upon each other, they discharged their gall upon the foaming sea, and made the inhabitants of the deep partake of their bitterness. It was a doubt with me which was most against their stomachs, the blows, or the ocean. By turns they looked sick, by turns sorry, and I left them with redoubled rage setting-to to take another round; and no doubt by this time there is no more of them left,  
than

than there was of the two famous Kilkenny cats. That now is a story told against us, and serves us right too—och, we are a clumsy set! and I never would trouble my country again, if my little potatoe ground did not trouble me.”

The Miss Templemores knew nothing of all this; they could not anticipate the unnational sentiments he professed; and Mary congratulated herself as warmly on having just read Lady Morgan’s *Florence M’Carthy*, as Cecil did that she should be able to talk to him out of Phillips’s speeches.

“They are the *schoolboys of the heart*,” remembered Cecil, “and I will tell him so the first opportunity.”

“*Ireland can best be served in Ireland*,” repeated Mary, “and my attack shall be praises to his patriotic nature.”

“*By nature ardent, by instinct brave, and by inheritance generous; the chil-*

*dren of impulse, they cannot avoid their virtues; and to be otherwise than noble, they must not only be unnational, but unnatural.* That will do," said Cecil; "I can talk upon this for an hour, and nothing so soon creates an interest, as a flattering panegyric on the character."

The party however were too noisy for them to have the opportunity of *making much way*; and understanding his desire of being invited to their ball, they reserved their acquired discernment for the evening. Stanley was particularly animated, sir Archibald strove all he could to be agreeable, colonel Clanmaurice was never still a moment, and Steinbach, who had joined their party, afforded as much amusement by his whimsical mistakes, as the others did by their quickness of fancy. Lord Mountvillars was the only sedate member of the community; for though he would join in the repartee for a moment, and electrify  
his

his hearers by the sudden and brilliant flashes of his wit, it was only for a moment; the next he relapsed again into the restless and unsettled being his friends but too often found him. Wrapt up in his own sombre thoughts, he wandered from one drawing-room to the other, unheeded by the merry group that occupied the one, and apparently so by the indefatigable Leslie in the other. But Leslie's heart was too true to its weakness, not to know when he was near her—not to rapidly hurry in its pulsation when she heard his steps approaching—not to sicken with the inconsistent thankfulness of joy, when again they were receding.

The hurry of her occupation, joined to the agitation his vicinity excited, had tinged her cheek with a bright scarlet tint; and the massive plaits of her dark brown hair, the snowy whiteness of her Indian robe, joined to the exquisite sym-

metry of her prostrate figure, gave her the appearance of a lovely idolatress worshipping the sun. Lord Mountvillars stood and gazed for a moment, then turned away, and seemed again to forget that she was present; yet again he approached her, and again receded, apparently without the perception that any one was near him.

Contending emotions warred in Leslie's bosom—she almost feared to stay; yet the necessity for flight appeared as the weak chimera of her fancy. She believed that he observed her not; and to substantiate the truth, she shook her ringlets back that had fallen over her eyes, and cast a hasty glance towards him. His were fixed upon her in doubtful admiration, and as their glances met, he seemed irresolute whether to advance or to retreat; but there was an attraction in the look he had met, that seemed to conquer his indecision; and after an un-

availing



availing attempt at resistance, the next instant he found himself by her side.

Leslie had witnessed not these struggles; she had resumed her occupation, and was again mechanically attempting to trace her figures on the floor, when he, the secret object of her adoration, threw himself beside her. With breathless anxiety she awaited the result, fearing that he would speak, and seeking to steady the tremors of her frame, that she might not betray her weakness when called upon to answer him; but a moment's reflection left little dread of the kind, for there had lately been so great a distance of manner kept up between them, that she almost smiled at the feeling that led her to expect it.

Lord Mountvillars did not speak, but appeared to her to be examining the various kinds of chalk that lay near her; and hoping that these were the sole ob-

jects of his attention, she endeavoured to resume at least the appearance of composure; but lord Mountvillars' gaze was earnestly fixed upon her—rivetted on the sweet melancholy imprinted on her face—entranced on the beauteous form, that gracefully reclined so near him. He was about to address her, when he perceived himself observed from the other apartment, and on major Steinbach's addressing something to him in German, he took up the chalk, and silently prepared to assist her.

The pencil trembled in Leslie's hand; and as she continued to trace the Arabesque figures, they betrayed by their zigzag outline the tremor her frame was enduring. In an attitude that rendered her loveliness still more lovely, she threw herself back, rested upon one arm, and laying down the crayon, seemed about to give up the undertaking.—  
“Do not take pattern by mine, lord Mountvillars,”

Mountvillars," she said, seeing that he was observing what she had done, "do not take pattern by it, for I am too tired to draw correctly."

A heightened blush suffused her cheek as she encountered his brightly-beaming eye; and to escape from his penetrating glance, that seemed to search her inmost heart, she again busied herself in her occupation. There was so little space left to be filled up, that they were both employed in tracing one pattern; and as their pencils abruptly passed each other, Leslie's hand more than once came in contact with his. The touch thrilled through her frame—she found her situation admitted of no alternative, and a moment's hesitation determined her choice. She again threw down her pencil, and was about to quit the scene.

Lord Mountvillars was soon aware of her intention, and without uttering a syllable,

syllable, he gently detained her with one hand, while with the other he traced these words upon the floor.—“ Hate me, Leslie, but, in pity, do not fly me !”

Leslie was staggered in her purpose, for there was a tender pleading in his look that could not be resisted ; and again her eyes, to escape from the softened expression of his, sought the ground, and again rested on his petition, while, dreading that it should be seen, with her disengaged hand she instantly effaced it.

Lord Mountvillars still detained her other hand, and feeling the questionable-ness of the situation, she sought to withdraw it from him. As though fearing to part with it, he resisted the endeavour ; and there was a suppliant feeling in the pressure he gave it, that again left her powerless, and uncertain how to act.

Encouraged

Encouraged by the success of his last attempt, he a second time traced his wishes on the floor, and Leslie was entreated, in even more forcible language, a second time, not to leave him. She became every moment more embarrassed, less able to quit the scene, yet feeling the necessity every instant becoming stronger. Her hand was still closed in the firm pressure of his; and though she repeatedly essayed to speak her wishes for its release, the dread that she might be heard by those in the next room, effectually silenced her. In this dilemma, she had herself recourse to the materials she used for drawing, and in a hasty manner she scrawled—"You are taking unkind advantage of the circumstances that keep me silent."

There was a sweet expression of wounded feeling in her look as she concluded—a dignified chasteness of manner, that immediately checked the presumption; and first pressing the little  
trembling

trembling captive to his lips, with a deep-drawn sigh he released it, saying, in a low tone—"Resentment and anger, Leslie, with you are momentary feelings towards every one but myself; it is my lot to offend, and never to be forgiven."

At this moment major Steinbach joined them; and lord Mountvillars immediately rose from his feigned occupation to converse with him, leaving Leslie unmolested to put the finishing touches to the border. Their conversation was held in German—desultory, and skipping from one subject to the other, when at length, without mentioning their names, Steinbach spoke of the three sisters.

Leslie abruptly rose from her knees, and the blush that had mantled on her cheeks, tinged to her very ears, as she said—"I should be taking a hateful advantage, major Steinbach, did I not tell you that I understand German." They started,  
and

and Leslie seeing his distressed look, continued—"Fear not that I shall repeat the sentiments I have undesignedly heard you express; and I wish, with all my heart, that you may change them as readily as I shall endeavour to forget them."

There was an indignant feeling of pride visible in her manner as she concluded, and she was turning away, when lord Mountvillars detained her.—"You must not be angry, Miss Templemore," he said impressively, yet tenderly taking her hand; "you cannot be offended with sentiments that owe their foundation to truth——"

"Then much less ought I to hear them," said Leslie, interrupting him; "yet do not mistake me," she continued, sighing as she spoke, "but believe, I grieve more that so unjust a comparison should have been made, than that I should so unwittingly have become acquainted with it."

Steinbach

Steinbach all this time seemed sadly *cut*; he knew not much the purport of what she had been saying, and his prevailing thought was, that the moment his back was turned, she intended relating what he had uttered to her sisters.

Leslie perceived his dismay, and possessing too kind a heart to allow him to maintain so tormenting a supposition, again assured him, in his own language, that nothing was so contrary to her intention, as to repeat a conversation she had so undesignedly become acquainted with. The party now from the next room joined them, and in a few moments the gentlemen took their departure.



CHAPTER IV.  
////////

For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,  
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood ;  
A violet in the youth of primy nature,  
Forward, not permanent ; though sweet, not lasting ;  
The perfume and substance of a minute—  
No more.

SHAKESPEARE.

.....

Yes, go ! nor let me see again  
That smile, love's treacherous token,  
Lest I once more resume my chain,  
And this poor heart be broken.

OPIE'S *Tales*.

THERE was an inconsistency in lord Mountvillars' manner, that could not pass unheeded by Leslie ; but while she too sensibly felt the tenderness he at times betrayed, it gratified her not, but rather led her to distrust his former attentions, than to place any faith in those of the present. With Mary, they were  
much

much less equivocal, and, as she herself had expressed it, the only wonder was they went no further. Sometimes Leslie would fancy they sprung more from the head than from the heart—that they proceeded rather from principle than from inclination ; but the next moment destroyed the idea, and the plain question, “ why should he do this ? ” shewed her its improbability. No, if he sought her sister, it must be for herself alone—if he loved her, it was unalloyed by any sordid motive, while that he had evinced for her by his own confession, was instigated by the worldly love of gold—a mortifying discovery ; and Leslie struggled hard to efface the tender infatuation his false, unstable preference had led her into ; but it yet clung to her heart in spite of her endeavours—was still dear to her, though connected with reflections that pained her much to dwell on. These, in time, must wean her from it—would teach her she was cherishing in  
her

her breast sentiments that she had need to blush for—sentiments that she shamed to confess the very existence of. Sometimes she fancied this wished-for hour had come, that she could meet him with calmness and with indifference; but his presence destroyed the illusion, and taught her still to tremble for the weakness of her nature.

There was a native elegance in his manners, that could not fail to undo the sobering reflections of her private hours; and when she saw him rising so transcendently superior to the swarm of fashionable flies that perpetually buzzed around them, she could scarcely wonder at the power he had gained over a weak, simple heart, that never had seen his equal. She sought in vain for his prototype, for in the world there were none like him. Some were conspicuous for disgusting rudeness, practised for affability; others for an equally-disgusting obsequiousness,

sequiousness, that set all appreciation of their minds at defiance; this entertained her with the history of a boxing-match, shewed her how they flung their *wisty-castors*, expatiated on a *chanceried nob*, and repeated the names of the *swells* that attended; while others, had she given them a hearing, would have taught her the whole art of farriery, by storing her mind with the true principles of *nick-ing*, *docking*, *training*, and *cropping*. In the society of lord Mountvillars, her mind expanded in the pursuit of his ideas; her soul glowed at the noble effusions of his; and her heart, true to its first attachment, yet beat on in all its hopelessness of passion. But there was no pleasure in its fond indulgence; it was the struggle of love against reason, and though love was sure to win the day, reason stood by, and pointed at the victor.

Continually thus at war within herself,

self, she was far from being happy ; restless and dispirited she passed the day, and sought the solitude of her own chamber, in preference to joining the empty dissipation of the night. She thought of her days of childhood passed in the ceaseless sunshine of delight, and she sighed on comparing them with those of the present.

The death of her idolized friend was her first sorrow ; long she had mourned her loss, and when time had ameliorated the desolation of her soul, and planted a portion of contentment there, it all vanished at the touch of love. The heart wants something to rest upon, but Leslie's was doomed to meet with disappointment ; she saw lord Mountvillars ; nature appeared to her in new colours—hers was the affection that not unsought was won ; for though she was deceived, he had appeared for some time to possess reciprocal affection ; all was hope—it was  
more

more, it was the day-dream of the fancy, too bright, too sweet, to be realized. Leslie thought she was beloved, and found herself mistaken.

The colour of our fate is but too often tinged by our first affections, and Leslie's promised nothing but patient misery ; she joyed in nothing but sad ruminations on the past, and gloomy prognostics of trials yet to come. The passion that had once dilated her heart with bliss, now became its trouble, reproached perpetually with her tears, and corrected by the same hand that had once administered to its weakness.

Her attachment indeed was no longer happiness ; yet while the presence of the object was inimical to its extirpation, she could not forego the pain thus blended with the pleasure. Still however she reasoned on the folly—still urged the necessity of obliterating her love, for an  
object

object that could offer her nothing to counterbalance the misery she was a prey to. She had felt her heart beat responsive to his own, and she had yielded it up without reserve, believing that she could never repent the confidence of placing it where excellence such as his enticed it from her.

It was by degrees that his character had developed itself, and she found, too late for her peace, that he had many, many faults—errors the most insufferable to the uprightness of her nature. Grief and bitter disappointment overwhelmed her; but her love, once raised on the semblance of moral goodness, still fondly hung to the recollection of the visionary virtue; but where was that elasticity of heart that repelled pain—where the sanguine chimeras of unbroken hope? The enthusiasm had passed away with the truth that had supported it—perished with trust betrayed—extinguished

guished with the singleness of heart that had led it to its ruin.

Sometimes Leslie would think herself deceived, and that he loved her still; that circumstances, known only to himself, induced his altered conduct; and that the tenderness he at times betrayed, was still the pent-up inmate of a perplexed heart. The opinion, once indulged, gained strength from circumstances difficult to be defined, and she clung to the image raised by her morbid fancy. Thus the passion she yet indulged, rendered it hard to be believed that she had ceased to interest the object of her tenderness; and while he acted as though there was still room to hope, futile were the arguments cooler reason suggested. But it was an unsatisfactory expectation she was indulging in; each attention he paid her sister, struck a deep chill to her heart, and she gave herself up to the conviction, that the being on whom her  
whole



whole existence depended, had but too surely left her for another. The poignancy, the tortures of the feeling, were not to be described—all seemed blank in futurity, and she felt that she could readily forswear the world, to ponder in secret on the recollection of brighter hours passed away for ever.

Oh, how painful when comparing the present with the past!—how heart-breaking to find that the voice that had haunted her in solitude, thrilled through her agitated soul in society, was breathing tenderness in the ear of another! Yet still did she hang entranced on those features that had once smiled upon her—asked, in a frenzy of the mind—“Can it be true so vast a change?” and almost wished to find the reason in herself, to spare so harsh an accusation from being pronounced on him she loved. Yet vain was every subterfuge: she remained but too truly the same. Lord Mount-

villars alone had changed; the ties of sympathy still existed in her heart, while those which had once vibrated in concert to them were gone, alas, for ever!

He was happy far from her—happy with an object least calculated even to bring back her very recollection. Nothing indeed could be more distinct than her own character and her sister's; and to love the one, was evincing to the other how little she could be cared for. Thus was Leslie situated, and what consolation could the world afford to sorrows such as hers? Despair, deep-rooted in her heart, was feeding on the love she cherished, and she had no relief from the soothings of pity, for pride imposed the necessity of concealing this inward consuming woe. Whole evenings, which before had been passed by her side, were now spent in administering attentions to her sister—evenings where all beside remained the same, to

attest

attest the change that she alone had suffered.

The loss of the heart we love is a calamity the mind shudders to contemplate; it is a sorrow that admits no limits; existence becomes a burden, and we would willingly shut out the light that shews us not, as wont, the fond looks of those we love; our whole being is changed from life to death; we call to mind incidents that prove our misery perfect—incidents that tell too true that we have ceased to be the object of affection, that the being on whom we had fixed our choice has left us for another.

What consolation, I again repeat, can the world afford to grief like this?—none. The only thing that remains, is to forego the sight of him whose presence reminds too strongly of the past, and blasts too surely our prospects of the future—whose conversation renders re-

gret more sharp—whose indifference tortures the heart that breaks to its undoing. Repulsed by something more cruel than hatred—stripped of consolation, what good can it bestow?—none, but to tempt the heart still to love on, when respect and hope are exhausted.

Leslie *did* love on; but the passion was locked within the confines of her own bosom; she saw that his moments were given to another, and she betrayed not the weakness that threatened to destroy her. To see him was all she asked; she would not tamper with the love he bore her sister, and she sought not to revive the affection he once had cherished towards her. With this she again retired within herself, never addressed the false object that filled her heart, and sought to avoid all that might make him conscious of her presence.

It was while following this conduct a  
ray

ray of light burst on her ; and the idea that he loved her still, filled her heart with new-found rapture ; but it was rapture that could not last : the next moment saw him constant to her sister, and Leslie was forced to confess again she was mistaken. Yet again the tenderness of his soul would beam upon her—again the feelings of the past revive, and she felt the heart once hers, though separated by a barrier independent of his will, was true to its attachment ; but in a moment these illusions were destroyed, and she suffered more from the transitory reprieve her hasty fancy brought her. This mockery could not long succeed, and the soft words of lord Mountvillars misled her mind no longer. Vainly he essayed to gain a patient hearing ; she shunned him, scoffed his kindness, and trusted him no longer.

## CHAPTER V.

Is it fit thou shouldst sit up whole nights, baking thy blood with hectic watchings? Alas! 'twill exasperate thy symptoms, check thy perspirations, evaporate thy spirits, waste thy animal strength, dry up thy radical moisture, impair thy health, and hasten all the infirmities of thy old age.

STERNE.

Blessed is he who hath no expectations, for he shall not be disappointed.

POPE.

Mrs. Templemore's ball went off, as all those gay sort of doings generally do. The young ladies, who had danced their hearts out, were delighted; while those whose shoes had enjoyed a sinecure, were on the *qui vive* to pull it to pieces. It had been literally crammed, for the supper was known to be coming from Carter's, and all the world were inclined to taste it. The democrats were richly  
studded

studded with the aristocrats, and the men of arms meekly qualified with civilians; all were huddled together within—all was bustle and confusion without: the carriages crushed the flies—the flies stung the carriages; the *Comet* was cut out by the *Moons*, and the *Times* run down by the horses—such was the outside; the in, equally heterogeneous, all disproportionably paired together—the thick and the thin, tall and short, fat and lean, pretty and plain, rich and poor.

The Miss Templemores were the queens of the night, and every body acknowledged their sovereignty—the most beautiful among the beauties, the gayest among the gay. Dissipation had not yet robbed their cheeks of their rosy tints; their eyes sparkled with the consciousness of their loveliness, and their smiles, which betrayed the happiness of their hearts, were innocently lavished on all who approached them. But colonel

Clanmaurice was their mark for the night: they had heard he was rich, saw that he was handsome, and felt him to be perfectly attainable; Cecil therefore promoted him to her list of flirts, and Mary thought he would make the other *string to her bow*, should either of her others evade her.

But their old favourites at the same time were not neglected, and Cecil could spare as many moments to her little ensign, as Mary with pleasure bestowed upon Stanley; but Stanley was not the same Stanley she once had known him: he rather avoided than sought her presence; and if, for a moment, she found him by her side, he as suddenly left it, to make room for lord Mountvillars.

In the society of his lordship, she found little to repay her for his loss: it is true, she was the envy of the circle while honoured by his selection; but  
with



with the novelty of the distinction, the pleasure vanished, and ten thousand times would she rather have been the companion of the *roué* Stanley, than the boasted favourite of the heartless lord Mountvillars. While basking in the sunshine of his smiles, she felt he loved her not—felt, that though so lavish of his praise, his heart was shut against her. Dissimilar in taste, unequal in understanding, and opposite in disposition, to use a coachman's phrase, they seldom *pulled together*; but it mattered not—he was determined to seem pleased, though she fancied she saw him smile in derision while countenancing folly.

Thus was she perplexed by his condescension, unwilling to give him up, yet expecting little happiness in the gratification of her ambition. This night, however, she hoped might decide her fate; she was determined to provoke his attentions to the utmost, and then, by a

*coup de grace*, to bring him to make proposals. This done, her anxieties would be at an end; and though she was certain she should never *feel at home with him* in the high rank she was about to enter, she supposed it could readily be dispensed with.

Cecil all the time was flirting, to her heart's satisfaction, with every one who surrounded her. The little ensign, colonel Clanmaurice, and even sir Archibald, all came in for their share of it. Steinbach alone kept aloof, and Steinbach, from that circumstance, regained a portion of her fading inclination; but nothing could entice him to her circle; and to indemnify herself for the slight his altered manner shewed, she made still greater exertions to captivate those present.

There is no accounting for the taste of a coquette; or how the little ensign pleased,

pleased, might be puzzling matter to many. He seemed indeed to have little to recommend him but his curly hair, and his pale blue eyes, his ready smile when the company smiled, and his assenting voice on all occasions.

Sir Archibald flattered himself *he was a better man than him, any day in the week*, and more confident in himself, by witnessing her attentions, he sought to win the day by exerting his own endeavours. If laughing pleased her, no one could laugh so well, and he “ha, ha, ha’d” for an hour. If she liked curly hair, the little he had curled; therefore here he was not deficient. Nothing remained then but to *cut the creature out*, and he commenced the struggle of putting it in practice. With this he rubbed up his elocution and converse, talked of the fineness of the weather, and corrected himself the next moment, on recollecting that it rained. By degrees, however,

ever, he became conscious of the force and grandeur of his own energies, cut the weather, and began to expatiate on the beauties of the modern poets, the dead languages, the dancing girls of Egypt, the Indian jugglers, and Toby, or the sapient pig.

Cecil could not stand this long, and the roughs and smooths, the bitters and the sweets, by turns broke in upon him; irritable contradiction one moment—a smile to obliterate it the next, till at length worn out by his self-conceit, and his emptiness of mind, she ceased to give him her attention.

Sir Archibald soon perceived the tide had turned; but desperate was the game he played, and desperate must be the throws; ruin stared him in the face on one side, if that the heiress should reject him on the other. What was to be done? He fixed his eyes like an Indian fakir

fakir steadily on the point of his nose, and prepared to think about it. The result of this cogitation was, to pick a hole immediately in the little ensign's coat, and he flew at it with all the furor of a turkey—talked of *gutter-scrappers*, *flag-trampers*, and all the depreciating terms he could think of, but in so low and so meek a voice, that no one but Cecil heard him.

Unconscious of the malice in force against him, the little ensign continued to pour his little nothings into one of Cecil's ears, while sir Archibald's venom was directed to the other.—“ Growls and curses, like a deadly gnome,” came from him; but Cecil heeded them not; she saw his drift, and her pleasure was to provoke him, and to excite still more, by continuing her attentions, the puffings of his jealous irritability. His mischievous sneers continued, and expressing all the contempt he could in his  
little

little wisened face, and taking advantage of the ensign's momentary absence, he said—"How very *young*," laying a pointed emphasis on the word, "how very *young* that *chap* is! when he grows older, it is to be hoped he will forget a few of his follies."

This seemed a reflection on her own understanding, and Cecil coloured up with anger; and repeating his last word, she continued—"When one meets so much of it in the world, sir Archibald, I do not know but the follies of *youth* are the most agreeable, and the least likely to annoy one." She was turning away as she concluded.

"No fool like the old one, then, you think?" said sir Archibald, forgetting, in his attempt to be witty, how near it came home to himself, "no fool like the old one, then, eh?"

"Exactly so," returned Cecil, with a look that could not be mistaken, and immediately left his vicinity.

This

This did not look much like *acceptation*, but sir Archibald was not to be cast down. There was a great deal of difference between *expecting* an offer, and having one really in one's hands; and he made no doubt but if he could *cook up a prime sort of a letter*, that she would be ready to jump into his arms the moment he extended them towards her. It was, in fact, sink or swim with him: his creditors pressed hard, and though he was dubious as to the extent of her possessions, from the belief that Mary *went her halves*, yet any thing was better than nothing; and the next morning *the devil might take him* if he did not *vamp her up a closer*—best hot-pressed, bloody hand for seal! tucked up in a *swell* sort of an envelope, and, egad, the thing was done!

All this time the dance went on merrily—the withered spinster forgot her wrinkles while treading its mazy round  
—gout

—gout was attempered to brisk motion, and dropsy to divine attitudes and light-some gesture—all attempted to shine, though nature and the waste of years denied to many the power. The feet of the dancers beat time to the music, and the music in turn beat time to the dancers; Jenkyns and D'Egville's steps vied with each other, while those who, from economy, *picked up* their skill, caught a hint from the learned *en passant*, for every toe cut capers, and every heart bounded to the motion.

At length the supper was announced—a supper known to be Carter's best turn-out—a supper where profusion reigned around—ices to refresh the appetite, conserves to pamper it, and French wines to provoke it; every delicacy of the season was collected together, the tables groaned with the weight of the feast, and the chickens and pheasants, like those of the far-famed *Lubberland*,  
cried



cried out—"Come, eat me! come, eat me! come, eat me!" No expence had been spared; the tongues were decked out in wreaths of orange and white flowers, which, like the *flowers of eloquence*, seemed naturally to spring there; in short, every viand was most profusely decorated, and Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

No sooner was the supper announced, than every nerve was screwed to its highest pitch; the barometer of joy rose many degrees, and all was bustle, agitation, and confusion—all pressed forward to "riot amid the sweets," and the staircase was crowded to actual suffocation. What was to be done? the stoppage was complete—"Mourn, indeed, ye miserable set, for now the measure of your woes is full," no possibility of moving—no admission, for Mrs. Basbleue and Mrs. Tantamount stopped up the entry, actually wedged in, while forcing their way through

through to that marvellous attraction, the *loaves and fishes*, keeping the rest of the company out from their *primum mobile* of life, their *elixir vitæ*, their sovereign balsam of felicity, and their grand scheme of perfect bliss. The “evidence of facts” was such, the ladies were jammed in; and until the pressure of the crowd appealed to their “true point of honour,” nothing promised relief. Once free, the supper-rooms were filled, and the tables immediately all surrounded by keen appetites and empty stomachs. The *acutis nasibus*, the *naso adunco*, the *suspensum nasum*, were all put in requisition; and like hounds in a chase, they hunted after that which best seemed to suit their purpose.

The Miss Oldboys, *comme à l'ordinaire*, were the *first* to seat themselves, and the *last* to quit the table. “Budge,” says the fiend *decency*—“budge not,” say they; and indeed where there are so many

many *gobbos* to keep them in countenance, they do right to play well their parts. The *gagging* act, as it is called, was thrown out, and well it was for those whose keen and hungry appetites lead them thus to prey upon their neighbours, and who make a principle of lining their insides, to indemnify them for the wear and tear of the out.

“Look at Mrs. Gas,” said Stanley, directing the attention of Mary across the table to her opposite neighbour; “look, what a tax it is, the once having possessed a fine face and a handsome figure; no doubt all the town is ransacked for the *juvenile spring stay*, and all the *friseurs* dunned to death for those hyacinthine-looking ringlets; but it will not do after all, and she, notwithstanding all her pains, can hide from no one, but a *blind man and a galloping horse*, the sad havoc that time and dissipation have effected in her charms; and yet she takes  
every

every means she can towards coaxing them to stay ; but, after all, perfidious wrinkles will appear, in spite of cosmetics. The bare throat presents a yellow tinge, which no art can disguise, rendered more conspicuous by that muslin tucker, shirt, or whatever it is called, tacked to the miserable row of white beads that encircle it ; then the black shade that encompasses the faded eye, the stays *à la Diane*, which in vain exert their art to mould her wasting figure. Lamp-black, ground in spirits of ginger, form the ornament to the “ crystal of the soul,” rouge gives complexion, ringlets juvenility. Yet what end does all this answer ? She might make herself a respectable *old woman*, but she turns out a devilish bad *young one*.”

“ Her face is really handsome still,” returned Mary, “ as far as that goes——”

“ And Heaven forbid it should go further,” interrupted Stanley, “ or the woman would be a perfect mask ! Those prominent

prominent features always frighten me."

"Not into good behaviour," returned Mary; "for, hard-featured or not, you spare no one. I should like to know what you say of me?"

"Say of you!" said Stanley, his eyes beaming brightly upon her, "say of you!" he again repeated, looking all he felt. "I would say with Beaumont," he softly, yet impressively added, "I would say that you are,

' ————— outwardly,  
All that bewitches sense, all that entices ;

and with Shakespeare, that

' I will believe thou hast a mind that suits  
With this thy fair and outward character."

"Mr. Stanley can become a flatterer, as well as a satirist," said Mary, casting down her eyes to hide the gratified feeling that sparkled there. "This is quite a *nouvelle* talent," she continued; "how long have you possessed it?"

"I do not *flatter*, Mary," he returned,  
in

in a tender yet emphatic manner, "it is no *façon de parler*; they are the sentiments of my heart—a heart that is often aching when it seems most glad; but it is as well to put the best face on things," he added, smiling away a sigh as he spoke, "and though

‘I am not merry,  
I do beguile the thing I am by seeming so.’

Mary dared not trust herself to ask him from whence sprung this change? indeed there was little occasion for the question; she saw it all beaming in his eyes, and her heart beat responsive to his silent passion. But this was not following the course she intended to pursue; and while Stanley possessed all her love, her thoughts still turned towards lord Mountvillars. Stanley, she was assured, was hers at any time; but her ambition was to inveigle rank and riches.

Things,

Things however had turned out differently to what she had anticipated ; lord Mountvillars seemed to have put his preference, or whatever it might be, to sleep, and was roaming about the rooms without any apparent purpose, giving himself up to mechanical movements, instead of indulging himself in acts of volition. He had danced the first quadrille with her, and that was all—was more absent, if possible, than ever ; and though he had managed to make her a few civil speeches, his calling her once by the name of *Leslie*, instead of her own, convinced her he was thinking little of what he was saying.

There was in the broad scale of his attentions presumptive proof that he *meant something* ; but when she, by diligent inquiry, pursued them to their source, they eluded her search, and she found herself bewildered by a variety of contradictory matter, for while, in a ge-

neral sense, they promised unlimited success, the heart, with its inherent tact, questioned their sincerity.

There is a language in natural feeling that eschews sophistry, requires no philosophy to render it intelligible, but sees correctly between truth and fallacy, and teaches us, in full and perfect proof, how to distinguish the voice of true affection from its counterfeit. Where it is, there is little doubt about it; but where it is *not*, heterogeneous conclusions are brought together to establish its validity: the senses lead us, without our knowledge, to a true criterion of judgment, and the instinctiveness peculiar to our natures guides us with precision to discover the true state of human feeling; and yet we smother the gift—rather prefer struggling after that we know is not, and seek to believe we are deceived, while we know but too well we are deceiving.

Thus



Thus did Mary, with no affection, tangible or visible, endeavour to conjure it up in the visions of her fancy, preparing to take attention as an equivalent to love, rank as synonymous with felicity. This night, however, which she had resolved on should decide her fate, left things in the same state as it had found them; or if any thing, lord Mountvillars' attentions had taken a retrograde motion, while Stanley had partly returned to his allegiance. The castle she was building received a shock, and fearing that it might eventually turn out a common brick-house, instead of the Vitruvian edifice she had projected, she resolved to be more circumspect in her conduct in future, and was resolved to *try tenderness*, to bring his lordship to some subjection. Yet all this time Stanley possessed her heart, and when he left her side, to seek the society of another, her eyes followed him, in spite of her political resolves, dodged after him through

the crowd, and never looked so bright as when he again was near her.

The *supper dance*, as it is called, is generally considered the pleasantest dance of the evening, as it is reserved for those whose society as a partner delights you. It is in this dance that heart meets heart, and if the world were sharp, by casting an eye around them, they could give a pretty shrewd guess *who and who were together*.

Cecil was paired with her little ensign, Mary was enjoying the society of Stanley, and Leslie, the quiet Leslie, was seated by the side of the no-less-silent lord Mountvillars. Mary eyed them from the distance, saw the apathetic air that apparently reigned between them, and was satisfied in knowing that though not with her, lord Mountvillars was in the best place he could be for the safety of her political interests.

Leslie

Leslie indeed seemed to regard him not; he had handed her to the table, much against her inclination, and with as little pleasure she saw him take the seat beside her; but she was now more distressed than surprised at any thing he did, and she sought, by entering into conversation with the next person to her, to take from the restraint attached to a *tête-à-tête*.

This person happened to be a pet of Mrs. Basbleue's, an Italian comte, who was tossing about the viands before him with his fork, in the same manner we English make our hay. With the true *politesse* of the Continent, every thing was offered to Leslie—" *Mi permette ch'io la serva? A che cosa vuol mangiare—Vuole della carne o del pesce?*"

Leslie declined taking any thing.

The Italian listened to her with defer-

ence, fancied he understood her, and was preparing to heap upon her plate as many good things as he had piled upon his own. Again Leslie endeavoured to make him understand that she desired nothing; but in vain: he had not fixed, he thought, on the right things, and again his dark eyes rolled round the table, to find something he fancied could not fail to please her—" *Ecco qui belle ciliege. Son bellissime! Mi permette ch'io la serva? La sua tavola era messa ala reale!*"

Again Leslie declined accepting any thing.

He could not understand it—could not take it into his comprehension, and again he began to proffer her every thing within his reach, saying between each—" *Dica quel che ama, signora?*"

Leslie, wearied by his continued persecution,

secution, at length explained to him in his own language that she wished not for any thing.

The Italian was in amazement, and the uplifting of the eyes, the shrug of the shoulders, evinced the little opinion he had of her sense, as he said—“*Che ! non vuole, ne bere, ne mangiare ?*”

This seemed almost a reproach to her want of courtesy, and Leslie blushed as she softly replied—“*Beverei volontieri un bicchiere di vino.*”

He seemed delighted to bring her round to reason, and finding that she was well acquainted with his language, began to overpower her with his conversation. She declared she understood little of Italian ; but he seemed to divine her reason for declining it, as he said—“*Non bisogna temere, bisogna esser ardito.*”

Lord Mountvillars all this time had continued silent, and Leslie was uncer-

tain whether he had not remained perfectly unconscious of the passing scene, when he said—"Miss Templemore's talents are something like Fontenelle's handfull of truths; she lets them out but one finger at a time."

Leslie blushed, for it called to her memory the scene in the morning.

Lord Mountvillars seemed to recollect it, and after a penetrating gaze, he said—"It is the want of precision in the choice of words that leads to many misunderstandings; and if I might venture, I would say, that Miss Templemore judges erroneously of what major Steinbach advanced this morning. I grant he expressed himself harshly; but, at the same time, an unprejudiced mind might have clearly distinguished his meaning."

"The disposition, bias, or temper, can have but little to do with so plain a statement,"

statement," returned Leslie, indignation rising to her eyes as she proceeded. "Major Steinbach might have softened his reflection, as you say, by using other terms, but he would still be arrogating to himself the power of censuring those whose right or wrong mode of conduct can be of very little importance to him. I confess I am angry," she said, seeing a smile that would not be suppressed rising to lord Mountvillars' countenance, "I *am* angry; but agree with me—have I not reason to be so? for though major Steinbach may form his own conclusions on it, it is the happiness of constitution, the joyousness of nature, the laugh, that repels the vexations of humanity, and that finds every thing in life conducive to their felicity, that he has stigmatized with the name of *levity*. Could I tamely stand by, and hear him censure sisters I love so much—sisters whose gladness, whose innocence of heart, is thus to be turned against them?"

She was silent, and lord Mountvillars said—"Do not mistake me, Miss Templemore. Major Steinbach's opinions are not mine, and yet I must be allowed to defend them: with you they seem strangely mistaken, for was not his speech rather the vehicle of an intended compliment to yourself, than a serious critique on your sister's?"

"And could he expect such a thing would be gratifying?" she interrupted, in a tone of unaffected surprise. "But I will not believe," she added, "he intended that I should understand him. This is his only excuse, and I am very willing to admit it."

"And yet, Leslie," said lord Mountvillars, again returning to the subject—"and yet," he corrected himself, and continued, "and yet, *Miss Templemore*, you are a distinct character from your sisters; they have none of the——"

Leslie interrupted him—"None of the querulous discontent, fractious peevishness,



vishness, unsocial inclinations—none of the habitual indolence, coldness, apathy, that have become with me second nature.”

Lord Mountvillars looked at her with tenderness; it was a heart-kindling expression, and Leslie's frame glowed with the soft emotion it excited. Exquisitely alive to the danger of her situation, she followed the example of some ladies opposite to her, and rose to leave the table.

Lord Mountvillars was soon aware of her intention, and making some difficulty of removing the chair that kept her from passing, he said—“ Leslie is changed—changed even from what I have known her: all warmth is chilled, all emotions are blighted, glowing sensations are repressed, by manners freezing-cold—her hand answers not to the pressure of——” He hesitated in the word

—"to the pressure of friendship : her eye replies to no expression of tenderness; and if she is sought by one who would reinstate himself in her favour, she is so cold, so listless, that his purpose falls unexpressed, and he retires to mourn the scorn in justice he does not merit."

Leslie replied not; her heart was softened, and dreading the disclosure of her feelings, she hastened, as soon as possible, to quit the apartment.

It was a late hour when the gentlemen again joined the ladies in the ball-room; but the dance was merrily resumed, and there appeared little inclination with any one to break up the joys of the night—joys that seemed to increase with the abridgment of the time that remained for their further indulgence.

The

The old and the young indeed all seemed to enjoy the dissipation—all hurried forward with different desires, yet all tending to the same point; some impelled by the frivolous wish of excelling their compeers—some from the debility of their mental faculties, gay to escape the *bore* of thought. The vain wish to be gazed at—the affectation of distinction—the pride of superiority—all form the happiness of the ball-room—a happiness that is shaken with every blast, and wrecked when it is least expected.

Solomon says—"In vain is the net spread in the sight of a bird: alas! the birds of the air are wiser than the children of dissipation!"—wiser indeed, for spread but the net of flattery, and, like herrings, the *pride of the earth* are sure to be caught in its subtle meshes. It is an odd world we live in, and the only wonder is, that where the good is so intermingled

intermingled with the bad, that we should pay so much deference to each other as we do. But we must take the good and the bad together, and continue to bear with the one for the sake of the other.

There are some who like to neutralize these qualities, blending their *devil* with so much of the saint, that they become uniformly stupid, vapid, and insipid. Others like in preference their *good-for-nothings*, and their *good-for-somethings*, kept apart and distinct; have families at home, mistresses abroad, and enjoy them both extremely, while the neutralizer starts from the latter, cools on the former, and passes his days in a doze. Perhaps it is an unfair criterion, but I hold that we have each as much good and as much bad in our compositions as our neighbours, only that some keep the good in one bottle, the bad in another; some mix a smaller part of the

the bad with a greater part of the good, and after a trifling effervescence, become decent people ; others a small quantity of good with a great deal of bad, and become average people ; others mix equal quantities, and are set down as little better than *milk and water sort of live lumber* ; others keep the bottle of bad carefully and slyly concealed, and are thought wonderful prodigies of propriety ; others conceal the good bottle, and are careless who sees the bad—are abused by all the world, but, in point of conscience, are as easy as their neighbours.

Mary Templemore took great pains to hide her bad bottle, for lord Mountvillars had joined her after supper, and whether it was the champaigne that had been freely circulated, and which had exhilarated his spirits, but she never found him so animated before. There was a wildness, a levity in his manner, that suited her much better than the general superiority of his demeanour—  
than

than the austere courtesy, which, while it sought to lessen the distance between them, only increased its formidableness, and added to the restraint it intended to dispel, as she was in the habits of remarking *she never could feel at home with him*: but this evening brought them nearer to a level than ever they were before, and though the rooms were beginning to thin, she still hoped, before they were quite empty, to bring him to the terms she desired. The poet says—

“ When *how d’ye do* has failed to move,  
    *Good-bye* reveals the passion;”

and though their separation would only be till the visiting hour next day, she yet hoped, in the excited state of his senses, it might have some influence over him..

But lord Mountvillars was more social than tender, and though unguarded, nothing was betrayed. Mary was at a loss to understand him, for though she  
could

could trace the progress of feelings and passions in others, his were still an enigma to her. His animation however delighted her; she ceased to look after Stanley, and while listening to his brilliant ideas, thrown open without reserve for the first time—unsubject to his sorrow—untinctured by his misanthropy, she felt all the amazing influence of his powers—looked at him with wonder strongly blended with admiration, and felt he was indeed a masterpiece of nature.

The rooms were now nearly empty; a few determined quadrillers alone occupied them, and Mary, in the failure of her schemes, was giving up her chance for the evening, when their conversation turned on love. This seemed to be her time, and she began to expatiate on *heart meeting heart—exclusive devotion—of liking, approving, loving—of taste, sentiment, and feeling.* Already she

she felt secure on the pinnacle to which she was rising ; in attending to her he had curbed the elasticity of his spirits, and he was apparently intent upon the subject.

At length the moment seemed to arrive : Mary vibrated with emotion, for at the instant Stanley, with her sister Leslie, passed across the room before them, the blood rushed into her cheeks, leaving her heart sick and cold ; but she had advanced too far to retreat, and she again turned towards lord Mountvillars.

She almost doubted the evidence of her senses : he also had changed, so much so, that she could scarcely believe him to be the same being he had appeared the moment before. A ghastly paleness had spread itself over his countenance—there was a wildness in his eye—and the goodwill he had borne towards her, all seemed to have vanished.

She



She doubted not but he was chagrined at her agitation on the appearance of Stanley, and she once more endeavoured to renew the subject they had wandered from. For a moment he continued the indulgence of silent reverie, and again she spoke of love. Still he was silent, and putting on her best looks, she raised her eyes to his countenance. Mary started; for all there was anguish and care, the agony of a tortured heart, and the struggles to conceal that heart's emotion. In vain he essayed to speak; the voice died away ere it rose to his lips, and he bit them with anger at the failure.

At length a violent effort overcame the dominion of his perturbation, and he resumed the smile of his countenance; but it was a ghastly smile, rendered more horrid by the contrast of the radiant one it had superseded. He attempted to resume his frivolity, to talk with the unconcern of  
a heart

a heart at ease, and to remove, by a renewal of his former gaiety, all impression of his late distraction. But the laugh was unlike the ebullition of mirth, and his words were the ravings of fancy. Friendship, he said, was a jest, enthusiasm a folly, and love the "shadow of a shade."

"So much for *jealousy* and *champaigne*," thought Mary, as he hastily took his departure. Her scheme had failed, but the occasion of the failure gave her fresh hopes of success in the future.

CHAPTER VI.  
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Why, give him gold enough, and marry him to a puppet,
 or an aglet-baby, or an old trot, with ne'er a tooth in
 her head, though she have as many diseases as two-
 and-fifty horses. Why, nothing comes amiss, so
 money comes with all. SHAKESPEARE.

.....
 I come to wife it wealthily in Padua;

If wealthily, then happily in Padua.

Ibid.

.....
 When I think of this world's pelf,

And the little wie share I hae o't to myself,

And how the lass that wants it is by the lads forgot,

May the shame fa' the gear and the blathrie o't.

Old Song.

“ To Miss Templemore.

“ York Hotel.

“ MADAM,

“ You cannot be so blind to
 the effect of your own charms as to ren-
 der it necessary for me here to disclose
 my

my passion—a passion disinterested as ever reigned in the breast of mortal, owing its birth to the perception of your virtues, and its encouragement to the favour of your smiles. In forming a connexion for life, there are many who think of nothing but money; but let such mercenary wretches look to the enjoying their ideas of felicity—ideas as distinct from mine as you are to the rest of your sex. With me your money is no object, for were you rich as Cræsus, or the like extreme, it would make no difference in my feelings towards you. With the choice of one's heart, a competency is sufficient; that competency I have to bestow. Think not then I am influenced by the love of gold, or that I tender you my hand on worldly considerations. Money may buy a horse, but will money purchase happiness? Money may give you good cheer, but will money purchase content to sweeten it? I am not so *slow* as to think it, and
with

with me the last question will be, *how much* you are possessed of? Do not think then I am one of those sort of fellows who set their sordid hearts on money, for though it is an uncommon good thing in its way, I again repeat, it is the last thing I can ever think of. I burn with impatience to receive your answer, when I shall take the first opportunity of laying myself at your feet.

“ Yours, most disinterestedly
attached,

“ ARCHIBALD MURRAY.

“ P. S.—I have no objection to settle all your money on yourself.”

“ *Qui s’excuse, s’accuse,*” said Cecil, handing the letter over the table to her mother; “ so much for disinterested affection.”

“ So much indeed,” replied Mrs. Templemore, dejectedly laying down the letter ;

ter; "I really never could have thought it."

Cecil took it up, and was again perusing it, when her mother continued—"I have often thought it was a mistaken plan the concealing from the world the arrangement of our finances. 'This,' pointing to the letter, "still further tends to establish the belief; for had not sir Archibald been dazzled by the hopes of your money, he might, ere now, have loved you for yourself. I cannot think how I came to fall into it."

"It seemed the tacit consent of all parties," replied Cecil, "for Leslie herself seems as desirous to conceal her good fortune as we are to take advantage of it."

"I hope you have *said* nothing," demanded Mrs. Templemore, hastily, "done nothing to establish the impression?"

Cecil smiled as she said—"Oh no, mamma; our consciences are quite quit
of

of that; but indeed there is little necessity for it, for the people are too ready to give us credit for all we desire, for it to require much *finesse* on our parts to enforce it."

"There is no good to be done here, I see plainly," said Mrs. Templemore, after some moments silence, in which Cecil had again amused herself by reperusing the letter; "there is nothing to be done here without money, and with it you may do it anywhere. I must say," she continued, with a long-drawn sigh—"I must say, I *did* have my hopes of sir Archibald; but since he has deceived me, I have little expectation that either you or your sister will ever form a connexion while we stay in this place. It is not the sort of thing for it, and were Leslie but in a little better health, I would, without hesitation, quit it to-morrow."

"If one of us were provided for," observed Cecil, not liking much her mo-

ther's determination, "you would have less anxiety about the other. What do you think of Mary's chance with lord Mountvillars?"

"Why, that if she succeeds in tempting him to have her, she possesses more management than I give her credit for."

"And yet he is very particular."

"He is so," said Mrs. Templemore, musing on the observation—"he is so, as you say." Again she pondered—"He is so certainly; but I do not think it will ever come to any thing. Mary's marks are as much too high as yours are too low."

Cecil saw a lecture in the distance, and murmuring to herself the words—"Oh! what's for love too high, or what too low!"

She drew the writing-table towards her, and prepared to answer her letter.

"What do you intend to say?" asked Mrs. Templemore, looking over her daughter's

daughter's shoulder on the little piece of paper on which she was writing a copy.

"Thank him for the honour intended," returned Cecil, still writing on—"compliment him on his liberality, and make him miserable with the idea that I am reserving *my fortune* for another."

"It is too visible," said Mrs. Templemore, again taking up the letter, "too evident that his views are merely mercenary; yes, it is as well," she continued, reading it over once more before her final determination. "Send a refusal by all means, for acceptance would only expose him further to our contempt, and subject us to the disclosure of our foolish double-dealing."

Mrs. Templemore, among a few of the *distingués* of Brighton, received an invitation to attend the festivities of P——h. The Miss Templemores were wild with delight; lord Mountvillars and Stanley they soon found were to be of the party, and nothing was wanting to complete

their felicity, for Mary was sure of happiness in the society of her adorers, and Cecil saw a wide scope for achieving new conquests in the opening before her. The gaieties were to last three days; public breakfasts every morning—balls every night—in short, nothing would be wanting to constitute felicity.

The expected day at length arrived; the carriage, with four post-horses, was ordered at three, and with tremulous delight the Miss Templemores awaited the coming hour. They had admitted a few loungers, and they longed ardently for the moment when they should make those not invited die the death of envy at the superiority of their own good fortune.

A knock at the door, but it was a double one, and the Miss Templemores slipped back into the chairs they had so readily sprung from.

“ We

“We have all been reviewed,” exclaimed the little ensign, bursting into the room before the servant, with red face and starting eyes, to repeat his tale of woe—“we have all been reviewed, and some say”—here he looked towards Cecil with a mixture of tenderness and reproach—“some say that Miss Templemore has done it.”

“Done what?” asked Cecil, with unaffected surprise, for she was totally at a loss to understand his meaning.

“We have all been reviewed,” he again repeated, “and they have all got it in their heads that you have done it.”

His voice faltered as he spoke, and while Cecil was wondering more and more how she could be suspected of interfering in military arrangements, he took a written paper out of his pocket, which more fully explained his meaning. It proved to be a lampoon against his regiment, and every one requested he

would read it. He began—"Particulars of a review taken of the Light——"

Here his voice quivered so much, that he was obliged to make it over to Stanley, who, with an audible voice, continued as follows:—

"Come, ye proud men of arms, and ye daring in fight,
Those who laurels have gather'd, most lasting and bright,
From the campaign in Spain and renown'd Waterloo,
Take your station before us, and pass in review.
None with fright, or with dread, let our scrutiny move,
For your gen'ral's a woman——"

"Meaning you," said Stanley, directing his looks towards Miss Templemore, then continued—

"For your gen'ral's a woman—her aide-de-camp Love!"

"Meaning you," said Cecil, interrupting him in her turn.

Every one smiled, and Stanley continued—

"Much engaged are all hearts in the story we tell,
And though right to begin with the good co-lo-nel.

His

His valour and virtues we quickly glance over,
For tho' handsome and gay, he can ne'er be our lover ;
So in haste we'll dismiss him from this gladsome strain,
As most strongly he's fetter'd by Hymen's firm chain :
But our pen is not wanting his fame to complete,
So with pleasure we turn to demure——”

“ We all know who this is,” exclaimed every voice at once. “ Pray go on.”

Stanley continued—

“ His commander's bliss viewing, must needs do the same,
Yet forgot to present the fair lady his name.
But we'll not be ill-natur'd, or say ought of ill,
Only whisper, *en passant*, ‘ deep waters run still.’
Many here, though most worthy, we pass in a trice,
Such as——”

“ Oh ! never mind names,” interrupted Cecil, anxious to come to the ensign's.
“ Pray, Mr. Stanley, read faster; you make it sound quite like a sermon.”

But Stanley was not to be put out of his way, and in the same tone he proceeded—

“Who is this that now steps forth since these are dismissed?”

A man whom they say's on the invalid's list.

What! inspect a sick man? our feelings forbid it!

If we gloss o'er his faults, the pity that did it

Would magnify virtues; and not here be it said

That our mercy or favour has justice misled.

To his brothers' attention no praise need be given;

He wants it not here—'tis recorded in heaven!

Then joy to the fav'rite of Mars and of Love,

With the aquiline nose, and the white front above!

And the brows that adorn it are Cupid's own bow,

Whilst his arrows are shot through the bright orbs below.

His lips are the traitors that laugh at the ruin

Which the rubies and pearls are constantly doing.

That heart is a lost one, though in armour it's cas'd,

Who sees his fine figure with elegance grac'd,

As it bounds through the dance, or glides gently along,

To the soul-moving waltz, or the gay cotillon;

His mind's worthy and pure as the gold without dross,

And his name—need we say it?”

“What nonsense!” again interrupted Cecil, at first delighted with the *éloge*, believing it to be the ensign. “It is really quite fatiguing. I think we have had quite enough of it.”

No one else however was of the same opinion,

opinion, and Stanley complied with the general wish by proceeding—

“Tho’ our courage now fails us, our fears we’ll surmount,
And haste to review a pompous old *count* ;
But our mind, should we speak, of this sarcastic elf,
You’d be tempted to think that *he wrote it himself*.
But now here is one, with his good-looking face,
And his love-laughing black eyes, our paper must grace.
His superior in figure, say where will you find ?
Such expansion before—such redundancy behind !
The fav’rite and friend of his brothers in duty,
The proudly-prized partner of each chosen beauty.
You’re now far away—yet, as balm to the smart
Of the love-stricken damsels who gave you their heart,
The wreath of *Vergissmienicht* you must not refuse ;
’Tis the hope of their love ! Now——”

“ Who do you think is coming ?” said Stanley, pausing a moment.

Many names were mentioned, but none the right.

“ You are dull people,” rejoined Stanley ; “ you should look to the rhyme.”

It was now soon ascertained, and

he continued from the line he had left off at—

“Appears on review—sure, ’tis Cupid’s own brother,
With curls over one eye, his cap over t’other;
And his neat little body, bedeck’d with such grace,
While ‘who views me must die,’ is proclaim’d in his face.
But though eyes on him glance, and soft sighs are handy,
The heart never falls to the lot of a dandy.
But we’ll let him pass on, nor say half what we feel,
For we scorn thus to break ‘butterflies on a wheel.’
Then let the fly live; and to quench Cupid’s fire,
Let him take a *good draught* of ‘Perkins’ entire.’
Who is this, who, like grasshopper, skips on before?
’Tis the youth who is known by the name of *Mouche
d’Or*.

Conjecture arises, from this appellation,
He gain’d it from valour and feats done the nation;
And the curls that in brilliancy rival the sun,
Secur’d him the title his bright deeds had won;
But place us not along with such gossiping folks—
We well know it was gain’d by his *gilded culottes*.
In the Temple of Fashion he has always his place—
In the Temple of Dandies, he might e’en shew his face;
But the Temple of Dandies, and the Temple before,
He would willingly barter for one *Temple-more!*”

Cecil blushed scarlet, Mrs. Temple-
more looked vexed, Stanley laughed,
and

and the little ensign was ready to cry with the intenseness of his confusion.

At this moment the carriage drove up to the door; all felt relief. The ladies were handed in, and amid the farewell of some, and the *adieu au revoir* of the others, the "all's right" was given, and they drove off.

Cecil was too happy not very soon to forget her late confusion, and though Mrs. Templemore took the opportunity of saying some severe things upon the folly of thus subjecting herself to the sarcasms of the public, they were all lost in the new anxieties she soon became a prey to.

Mary was not exempt from them, but had, as well as her sister, all the sinkings of the heart, and blood rushing to the face, occasioned by the momentary

fear of having left something behind. Satisfactory assurances however soon came to their aid, and they recollected, one thing at a time, that they had certainly put them into their trunk; this cleared off, still other fears came on.

“My wreath of moss rosebuds,” said Mary: “I would lay any wager I have left them behind! I cannot remember, for the life of me, whether they were put up with the other things.”

“I saw you put them into your band-box,” said Cecil, reassuring her.

“Are you certain?”

“Yes, certain. I only wish I knew as well,” continued Cecil, “which pair of satin shoes I have brought with me. I never thought of it at the time; but I make not the least doubt I have left my best, and have selected instead a pair of old ones.”

“The pair you put up,” said Mary,
“were

" were wrapped up in paper; so, I should think, they are the right."

" White or brown?" asked Cecil, with anxiety.

" An old letter, I think," said Mary.

" Then they are my best," returned Cecil, with delight—" they are my best; for I wrapt them up in sir Archibald's brilliant offer of marriage."

" Determined, I suppose," interrupted Mary, " that though it is no longer of value to your heart, it shall, at any rate, become serviceable to your *sole*."

Mrs. Templemore soon caught the infection, and Cecil was delighted to find that she had forgotten all about the impertinent review, in anxieties concerning the welfare of her *toque*, which, whether it would come out of its box squeezed, or in the same state as it was put in, was matter of questionable concern that entirely occupied her feelings. Leslie alone seemed at ease, for she was

so used to trust to the memory of her maid, that she sat apparently Placidity's self in the corner of the carriage.

"There goes Mrs. Tiltabout home from her morning's drive," said Cecil, as they passed her carriage a few miles on the Worthing road. "I think she must kill a pair of horses a month, for she thinks nothing of a ten miles airing."

"No wonder," returned Mary, "if you reflect a moment on the old proverb. I suppose she is recruiting herself after her yesterday's fatigue. You should have heard Stanley recount it."

"How did the party go off?" asked Cecil.

"As usual," replied Mary; "the porter, *alias ploughman*, received them at the door, when the footman, *alias coachman*, ushered them into the presence of the hospitable hostess, whose anxiety was such, that it almost led her to the top of the stairs to receive them, bobbing

bing about, and *how-d'ye-doing* herself into their notice; and '*wont you please to be seated?*' was then repeated till the whole party had fixed themselves. That done, her next anxiety was to remove them all to seats that she thought *more pleasanter*. The situation of one was considered too cold, another was recommended to one, with a view of *wast rurality*—another sat in the air of the door, and another, who had selected a couch to himself, looked, *for all the world, like a frog on a washing-block*. This lasted till another party entered, and then it was all to begin again with the last arrival."

Cecil laughed heartily at the account, and Mary again resumed.

"The table," he said, "literally groaned with the weight of the feast; every dish was of the largest and most substantial kind, and where the delicacy
of

of the poultry could not come under the denomination of immense, the mystic number *three* crowded each dish, and made up the difference. The second course was not to be outdone, and there was gathered together such an assemblage of puffs, pies, and patties, in all their varieties, that you might have readily believed yourself to have been in a *pastrycook's shop*."

At this moment they entered the lodge gates, but as the park was large, they had a mile or two to go ere they reached their journey's end.

The lodge was too pretty to escape their notice, and Mary, taken with a sentimental fit, exclaimed—"I think one should have a much greater chance of unalloyed happiness in passing one's life in that dear little thatched cottage, than in spending it in all the grandeur necessarily

cessarily attached to the superb mansion we are approaching."

Cecil interrupted her by saying — "Of course, Mary, you place in your 'mind's eye' the man of your heart seated with you at that picturesque casement window, dressed in all the comeliness of a straw hat and fustian shooting-jacket, while the beauty of his neat foot is hid under the clumsy cut of a pair of *ancle-jacks* or *high-lows*, whatever they are called."

"Indeed you are mistaken," returned Mary; "I placed no male model in my picture, believe me; they are the worst pieces of furniture you can place in a small room; they do things on much too grand a scale, and if you escape being tripped up over their straggling *ancle-jacks*, you are sure to have your teeth set on edge every minute, by brushing against their coat-sleeves, that is, unless as you say, they are composed of *fustian*."

By

By this time they had arrived in sight of the great house, and they had just fresh-modelled their curls, and put their frills and ruffles *comme il faut*, when the carriage stopped at the door.

CHAPTER VII.



Beauties in vain their sparkling eyes may roll ;
Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul.

POPE.

.....

“ A tale *without end* !”

“ A tale without end !” rejoined I.

He paused.

“ It has a beginning,” observed I.

“ And it has also a *middle*,” said my friend.

“ But then it has *no end*,” returned I ;

And there we left it.

EVERY thing at P——h came up to the Miss ‘Templemores’ ideas of delight. There was a large dinner-party the first day, and a ball at night ; and though Cecil had the vexation of finding a blood-shot eye the result of her journey, and Mary, that drawback to grace, an inveterate stiff neck, yet they were perfectly satisfied, notwithstanding that they were,
without

without a doubt, the prettiest girls in the room.

Lord Mountvillars and Stanley had travelled together, and the two friends felt all the restraint of being united in such close quarters as a post-carriage. There had for some time existed a distance between them, each sensibly feeling the effect, yet neither taking any measures towards discovering the cause. It was matter of vexation the thoughtless arrangement that had now thrown them together, and the first few miles were spent in silently wondering at the folly, or in constrained remarks on the various objects they passed by.

By imperceptible degrees, however, their conversation got round to a subject more interesting to both; the Templemores were mentioned, and each seemed answering his own ends in the remarks that were made upon them; but

but still there was nothing like confidence between them : observations were made and replied to, yet still each heart closely guarded its secret.

Like duellists, however, who fight across a handkerchief, they were too near not soon to take a surer aim, and lord Mountvillars, for the first time, discovered the silent passion of his friend ; his thoughts rushed back to a thousand past circumstances that tended to establish the truth, and with it the cause of the diminution in a friendship they had so long entertained towards each other.

Stanley, knowing not that he was betrayed, continued the conversation, stilled the beatings of his heart, and, in a careless tone, congratulated his companion on his prospect of felicity with Mary.

Lord Mountvillars fixed his eyes steadily

dily on those of his friend, and said—
“ You are trifling with your own feelings, Stanley, and are misjudging mine ; it is too evident you love her yourself.”

Stanley vibrated from head to foot, and concealing the workings of his countenance with both his hands, he replied—
“ I *do* love her, Aubrey ; but what avails it ? Is it wise that I should sue where my friend is but too successful ?”

Lord Mountvillars bit his lip, twirled the tassels of the carriage, and at length said, with a decided tone—“ Stanley, I have told you I shall never marry.”

His friend cast on him an inquiring look, where reproach was visibly blended ; indeed there were many feelings struggling with each other, and once more he hid his face to conceal them from observation.

Lord Mountvillars, no less agitated, again addressed him, saying—“ This,
Stanley,

Stanley, is the work of your infatuated friendship; it is you that have taught me to be a wretch—to trespass on your inclinations, and driven on by despair, I have followed your misguiding councils—have acted up to sentiments I do not feel, to efface others that are tearing me to pieces. What will gold be to me, when the heart is wrecked in its purchase?”

He paused, then continued, in a tone of bitter resolve—“ Better were it a thousand times to grovel on in misery, than to bear about the toils that have lured on still further to my destruction.”

He took Stanley’s hand—“ They were cold calculations,” he continued, “ my friend, you led me into, injurious to your sentiments, and at variance with my own; but they are ended, and I curse the hour that first saw me stoop to play the hypocrite—curse the hour which, in wounding your heart, Stanley, now tends to heap deeper tortures
on

on my own. Believe me, when I say, I pray Heaven you may be happy—nay, distrust me not, *happy with Mary Templemore.*”

“And you,” said Stanley, firmly pressing his friend’s hand—“what, Aubrey, shall I beseech of Heaven for you?”

Lord Mountvillars interrupted him; his lip quivered, and he dashed a tear from his eye, as he said—“Strength, Stanley, to bear my sorrows as a man, fortitude to uphold me in adversity, and callousness of heart to close it to the only blessing that mercy has vouchsafed me.”

The conversation was here put a stop to; but though Stanley was sensibly relieved by the declaration of his friend, there was too much despair couched in his concluding words for him to feel all the satisfaction that might otherwise have accrued from it; and though lord Mountvillars pointedly ceased in his attentions towards Mary, so much had he
reason

reason to doubt the cause, that he failed to take advantage of it.

Mary however seemed to heed not the change; the officers invited from the out-quarters very seasonably filled up the void, and the defalcation of her late allies was apparently unregarded. Indeed it would have required not a little to have embittered the Miss Templemores' cup of felicity; every thing was new—every thing delightful; they seemed to be *living* for the first time in their lives, and the only drawback was, that in three days they would return to a home that for the first time took the character of *homely*.

Leslie alone was dissatisfied; but, as she herself had expressed it, dissatisfaction with her had become second nature, and she patiently awaited the time that would relieve her from the painful constraint the being in a houseful of company

pany occasioned. Fearful of exciting remark by keeping her own room, she joylessly mixed with the crowd, shunning, as much as possible, the assiduous attentions of the men, and avoiding, with equal distaste, the frivolity of the women.

To speak philosophically, a woman must repel before she can attract, and Leslie guessed not that she was eliciting her troubles, in thus seeking to avoid them. Ovid knew not a little of human nature, when he made Daphne fly so fast from her laurelled lover; his passion was increased by the pursuit; and Leslie, by the same measures, gratuitously obtained those attentions other girls were straining all points to arrive at. In truth, our modern Daphnes are different sort of people to the far-famed one of old, and instead of flying from, they reverse the order, run after their Apollos, and are then surprised that they

they cool upon their advances, not recollecting that lovers are like sportsmen, to whom the possession of the game is nothing in comparison to what they enjoy in the pleasure of the chase.

Leslie was a *rara avis* in the little world of fashion to which she had been transplanted, possessing most palpably the powers of pleasing, yet never striving in the least degree to please. There was no coquetry in all this; her character was studied—its perusal surprised, and it was the wish of all to make an impression on a heart so untutored in the hackneyed routine of life.

Leslie felt this, and shrunk yet more within herself; but her gentle repulses only tended to augment her troubles, and she anxiously looked for the time that would release her from a distinction she so little desired. She wished to see no one—hear no one, but lord Mountvillars—to

watch him from the distance, and to dwell on his charmed accents, though directed to the attention of another. She desired not even his attention towards herself; she was sure to pay for it dearly.

For the next moment, as though to indemnify her for the lapse, his devotions redoubled towards her sister—that sister who had confessed she loved him not, while *her* whole soul was wrapt up in his image. Yet though she almost arraigned Fate for the contrarieties of our natures, she felt indescribable relief from the disclosure—a disclosure that satisfied her heart that it was doing no wrong to a sister's peace, while indulging the infatuated feelings that so sensibly militated against its own. There was no harm then in continuing its indulgence—a fatal argument for her repose, and she now hugged his image more closely to her heart than ever, weeping over his inconsistency, and lamenting the
the

the unpropitious will that denied her his affections.

The visit to P——h broke in upon all this. It is true that he was still near her; but she wanted solitude to nurse the indulgence of the sad, the tender thoughts that now were her only pleasure. All these were destroyed in the round of mirth they had entered on; meditation was put to flight, and she had to listen to conversation that only fatigued, instead of diverting her.

Lord Mountvillars was the only one who heeded her not, and though she would at times detect a stray glance, the manner of its removal told her too plainly it was merely accidental. Sometimes he would approach near to the seat on which she rested—hesitate—and when she has thought the next step would bring him to her, a stolen look has shewn her he was gone, and the

quick beating of her heart subsided to the disappointment it experienced.

Owing to the badness of the weather, the billiard-room in the morning was the point of general meeting; here the gentlemen assembled to shew their skill, and to exhibit the graceful attitudes attendant on the game. The ladies flocked after them to witness their endeavours, each interested for her favourite, glorying in his success, and ostentatiously expressing the delight his boasted victory gave her. Bets ran high, gloves were lost and won, and the whole was a scene of gaiety and confusion.

Lord Mountvillars at length entered the lists, and Leslie was solicited to name her favourite. A bright tint of scarlet suffused her cheeks, her eyes sought the ground, and, in a tremulous tone, she declined taking any interest. She was not, however, so easily to be
excused ;

excused; the gentlemen persisted in their entreaties, and to escape from them altogether, she framed the excuse of a headache, and suddenly left the apartment.

Thankful for the escape, she retired to the library, a beautiful room, deserted by all but herself, and drawing a large fauteuil to the fire, she threw herself into it.

Resting her head upon her hands, the feelings that had been pent up within her bosom all burst forth; the pleasures and dissipation that surrounded her were insupportable; great distractions of mind are always at the expence of the heart, and she longed for home, where she might again renew the thoughts that were now almost as strangers to her.

A prey to the torments of an unhappy passion, yet feeling all its folly, one mo-

ment she would endeavour to reason herself out of it—would open her eyes to the invincible indifference that marked lord Mountvillars' actions towards her—would think of his affection for her sister—would feel that his heart was shut against her—was dead to the preference that had so cruelly misled her; then she would try to teach herself to hate him;—but it would not do; she only hated herself for the impotency of charms that had turned his soul against her.

While indulging over and over again these tormenting reflections, she heard the library-door open, and believing it to be a servant, she arose, and was leaving the room by an opposite direction, when the sound of her own name prevented her. It was lord Mountvillars. In a piercing tone of entreaty he addressed her, besought her to stay, and deploring his own intrusion, prepared again to quit the apartment.

Already

Already he had reached the door. Leslie bowed to the attention, and was again resuming her place at the fire, when, in the soft tones of entreaty, he said—"Why, Leslie, do you force me to quit you?" He hesitated a moment, and appeared to be struggling with his inclinations, then continued, in a resolved tone—"Nay, Leslie, it is impossible; I cannot—will not do it;" and the next instant he was by her side.

Leslie rose, and was preparing again to leave the apartment, when lord Mountvillars took one of her hands within his, and firmly detained her. She dared not trust herself to speak her displeasure; a sudden agitation seized her, and she felt all the necessity of flight, without the powers of effecting it. There was a tenderness in the pressure of his hand that taught her to fear him; he was trifling with the affection she bore him,

and she again sought, with earnestness, to disengage herself from him.

With an air of wildness he strained her to his heart, then sunk on the ground before her, and concealed his face by resting it on her knees—"Forgive me, Leslie," he softly breathed; "sweet angel of goodness, forgive me! I know not what I do! I have lost my reason—lost all but the love that thus distracts me."

An indignant feeling swelled at Leslie's heart; she was again about to become the repository of his secrets, and she shrunk with horror from the confidence he would repose in her.

Lord Mountvillars instantly perceived her repugnance; he rose from his knees, released her little trembling hand, and retreated some paces from her. The colour
of

of his cheek grew strong, then faded to ashy paleness, as he said—"You hate me, Leslie, and you cannot conceal it from me."

There was a pensiveness in his tone that sensibly affected her; tears sprang to her eyes, and in token of amity she extended her hand towards him. He took it coldly, for she had turned her head away, to hide the intenseness of her feelings, so coldly, that it struck a chill to her heart, and she feared she had forfeited the little share of affection she had hoped he still bore towards her.

"It is over," he at length said, in a tone that betrayed the struggle with his feelings—"it is over, Leslie; my brightest visions are at an end, and the regret which they leave behind must be locked in the recesses of my own wretched heart—a heart so lost to every sense but love, that it cares little how soon it is broken."

Leslie could no longer conceal her emotions; convulsive sobs vibrated her frame, and the tears stole through the hands that endeavoured to conceal them.

For a moment lord Mountvillars intently regarded her, watched the workings of her frame, and seemed to gain a ray of hope from the witness of her suffering. Gently he removed her hand from her countenance, and in a softened voice he said—"Leslie, you weep—you weep for me, yet still would hide your pity; but deny it me not, Leslie, for I need it all—all, ay and more! A kind look, Leslie, would do much towards soothing my affliction."

Leslie turned her soft eyes towards him; a look of *measured* affection smiled through her tears, and in an earnest tone she said—"Had I the means, lord Mountvillars, of lessening your inquietudes, Heaven knows how joyfully I would employ them. I feel most sensibly

sibly for your sufferings, whatever may be their nature." She hesitated, then continued in a tremulous tone—"Perhaps if I knew them better, I could better speak them comfort."

Lord Mountvillars had again sunk on his knees beside her—he had again taken both her hands within his, but he placed them from him as he said—"Leslie, there is a coldness in your manner that but mocks the commiseration you extend me; it does not soothe—it does not solace me, but rather leads me to dread destruction to those hopes that rest upon you for their realization."

The gloom of despair again settled on his countenance; he rose, and walked a few paces from her, controlled the rising sigh, and continued, in a tone of forced firmness—"I can suffer deeply, and can still be silent—can deny myself the last blessing left me—can control a lacerated, a devoted heart—can leave for ever the object of my love, who
heeds

heeds not the wretch that she has made me."

As he concluded, with an air of unrestrained transport, he again strained her to his heart, then hastily prepared to quit the apartment.

Leslie advanced some steps after him—"Hold, my lord," she said; "leave me not thus a prey to hopes whose downfall may distract me. Tell me—oh, tell me, the feelings you allude to! Oh God!" she said, sinking on the ground, and hiding her features in the cushions of the chair, "I have had a heavenly vision! have mercy in its dispersion!"

She sunk confounded with what she had said; an indiscreet moment had betrayed her love; she covered her face still farther with her hands, and awaited with anxiety the moment that should tell her he had left her. For an instant
all

all was silent, a kind of stupor seemed to absorb her powers, and she shrunk yet closer to the downy pillow on which she rested.

At length a soft voice struck upon her ear—her own name was tenderly uttered, and she knew lord Mountvillars was once again beside her—“Hear me, Leslie,” he said; “look up, my Leslie, and hear me. *My* Leslie, did I say?” His head reclined close to hers, and she felt his soft breath pass lightly over her cheek, as in a whisper he continued—“Yes, heart and soul, *my* Leslie, though destiny divides us. It is time that you should hear how fervently I adore you! doting to distraction, yet dare not ask you to return the love that urges me still further to my ruin. Hear then the disclosure of my woes, the misery that has dragged me down to play the hypocrite that Leslie blushes to find me—hear the reasons that have tempted me to feign
those

those sentiments towards your sister, never excited by any other but yourself. Oh, Leslie, you know not how much I love you ! never was passion more ardent, for never was one more strongly combated ; but vain have I strived to draw the arrow from my heart—the attempt only served to lacerate the more ; for could I see you every day, and cease to love you, the sweetest flower on earth ? —oh no, Leslie ! every day but riveted my chains—every day taught me still more to adore you !”

“ Then why,” said Leslie, “ that false dealing towards my sister ?” Her heart was wrung by contending emotions ; she felt lord Mountvillars loved her, but she felt also that he had acted unjustly towards another. Perhaps his engagements with Mary were already fixed. It was a horrible thought ; his actions were incomprehensible, too intricate for her to fathom. These reflections again repressed the tenderness of her bosom ;
she

she shrunk from his ardent gaze, and said, with a distant manner—"The feelings you express are new to me, and at variance widely with your actions. Let us better understand each other—let us acquire sentiments conformable to the nature of our situations—reason prescribes it—duty enacts it, and from you I look for the example. Let me then no longer find you an inexplicable being, but a tender friend—an affectionate brother."

While she spoke, the agitation of lord Mountvillars increased by degrees; she felt it communicate to the hand that still held hers. A mortal coldness seemed to glide through every vein as he replied—"Drive me not to distraction, Leslie, by alluding to my baseness. I never loved your sister; cares for the future alone drew me towards her—providential cares that shame me in recital, and heap fresh burden to the load of my misfortunes. Mine are not the griefs of morbid sensibility

bility—they are misfortunes that arise from serious perplexities; but I am a man, Leslie, and, as such, I hope I yet shall bear them.”

Leslie's tears flowed afresh; she dreaded to learn the extent of his sorrows, yet tenderly entreated their disclosure.

“I am not one of those,” he replied, “who would ease themselves of absolute and irremediable woe, by robbing their hearers of tranquillity; but it is right, Leslie, you should know the cause that tears me from you.” Leslie shuddered, and instinctively her hand grasped firmly the trembling one that held it. He felt its pressure, and a tear started in his eyes, as he said—“Blessed girl, how shall I ever leave you—how resign my only bliss on earth, to become a solitary, a pennyless wanderer? In three months, Leslie, I become a beggar—no hopes to rest upon—prospects dark and desolate
—my

—my every power snatched from me, and Leslie, my brightest joy, parted with for ever! This now constitutes my only care: I once thought I should mourn only my blighted prospects; but my agonized heart has since convinced me of the error. What is the loss of wealth, compared to the attendant pang of parting with you, sweet love? Yes, Leslie, I lose you in the moment that tells me, surely tells me, you are my own. Thus are my griefs blended with my joys! I have seen the pity of your countenance, heard the tender tones of your voice; nay, Leslie, hide it not, but tell me you do not hate me—tell me you forgive a presumptuous being for harbouring those feelings towards you, which Heaven itself made the free properties of his heart; all the rest is foreign to it: yet I am not by nature deceptious, and though I have hitherto dissembled, it is a part I will play no longer—I will struggle no more against my love—I will not even desire
to

to be freed from it—it has been my only consolation, yes, in spite of the trials it has made me suffer, it was dear always to my heart. Its extirpation would have appeared to me a real annihilation; I can leave you, Leslie, but never, never cease to love you——”

“ And why should we be more wretched than we are?” said Leslie, fondly interrupting him; “ why must we part the moment of our union? You inspire me with vague fears of misfortune in partaking of your lot. Explain, lord Mountvillars.” She hesitated, and, in a subdued tone, she murmured the utility of her sixty thousand pounds.

“ Oh, name it not, Leslie!” he replied, still ignorant that she was the possessor, “ oh, name it not, Leslie! it is the bribe that so long bought me from happiness—happiness I might have enjoyed till want shall blast it for ever. Heated at the gaming-table, my father lost his all—died under the pressure of threatened evils,

evils, and dying left them entailed upon his son. To you alone, Leslie, has the exposure of a parent's weakness been betrayed—a weakness that has only allowed me the enjoyment of those riches a twelvemonth, I had been taught to expect for ever. Too proud to beg, I have failed to take its advantage; the time approaches, and finds me unprepared as ever, sinking under the blow, and resolved to fly from a country that has witnessed my prosperity. In a few days I quit England for the new world, there to waste out my hours in care: I dare not ask you, Leslie, to share my fate. Can this fragile form bear the buffets of stern fortune? for though fondly sheltered in my breast, they would yet glance upon you.” Leslie was about to speak; he kissed away the words, then continued—“No, Leslie, I dare not lead you to misfortune; every blow would strike still deeper to my heart, if it only passed over thine. Should I die, what would then
protect

protect you? No, Leslie, I dare not do it; Heaven is the only place where we may meet—death the only friend that can bring us again together—death that will now be the work of sorrow, not the remorse of having led you into woe. In acting thus, I do violence to the ardour of my passion; for did I consult but that, Leslie alone should tell me I must leave her; I would ask her to fly with me to the furthest corner of the globe, to participate my lot, and to chase away my sorrows by the sunbeams of her presence; but Leslie might then well doubt the extent to which I love her. Could I bear to see these rosy lips pale with penury and care—these starry eyes, whose fire renders them so lovely, all sunk with the sorrow to which I had subjected her? Accustomed to the happy effervescence of her love, could I bear to see it chilled by the blighting hand of want? Oh, Leslie! the very thought drives me to distraction! Let me draw a veil over a
perspective

prospective more terrible to contemplate than losing you for ever."

"Oh, my friend!" said Leslie, "why this inconsistency—why talk of parting with happiness within our reach? Lord Mountvillars, I do not understand you; you say you love me, yet reject the hand that would lighten your vexations. Say rather you are acting on my credulity: I have no confidence in your love—it is all fatal dissimulation, presuming on a weakness that is so harshly corrected by the coldness of your councils; but it is a defect that in future shall be foreign to my heart—it is terminated, since I see and condemn the capriciousness that fosters it—I will root it out of my soul, and enrich that soul instead with those regulated feelings, which will force you to restore me your respect, while you return to those ties you are now so culpably abusing." Lord Mountvillars stood the picture of agony before her. She saw and pitied his distress, extended her
hand

hand towards him, and continued, in a gentler tone—"Forgive my petulance—I feel that I have wronged you—I see clearly into the kind motives of your heart, and it is equally fair that you should read mine—a heart wounded by your refusal of that wealth it has long lost the enjoyment of. Think not I am acting from ostentation, or that I would claim thanks for what I part with so readily; this is not a time for the trifling of false delicacy—it may be our last meeting." She hesitated a moment, then continued with acquired firmness—"All my possessions are in my own hands;" again she paused, "consider them, my lord, at your disposal; the privacy of my future life will render them unnecessary—take half—take all—every thing to make you happy."

Lord Mountvillars could not long remain in error; he discovered that Leslie, and not Mary, was the favourite of fortune.

tune. An *éclaircissement* took place, and in a short hour, Leslie Templemore quitted the library, the affianced bride of lord Mountvillars.

Thus it is the benefits of this world are frequently distributed ; the rich take the poor, the poor get the rich, chance settling the difference of accounts, and bringing us all very nearly to the same level.

The two Miss Templemores left P——h perfectly dissatisfied with their own home, and every moment was spent in wishing they could do things in the style of other people. Every thing annoyed them they met with ; the small teaspoons, the black teapot—then having to make the tea themselves, instead of its being handed to them on a silver waiter. In short, they could bear the sight of nothing that belonged to them. The blue crockery at dinner took away

their appetites—so different to plate!—then the odious carefulness of having to lock up the wine, and the tea and sugar—their mother took every body for thieves. How did lord E—— contrive it? His cellar was never empty, and they'd be bound he never did such a thing. Oh, it was hateful to be so cramped in their means; and again they both ejaculated with a sigh—"Oh that we could do things in the way of other people!"

It was the information of Leslie's intended marriage that brought them round to their proper senses, and the home which they had so much abused appeared to their disturbed minds a palace, comparatively speaking, to the one they must now return to. What was to be done? The only alternative seemed marriage, and Stanley had no difficulty in persuading Mary to become his on the same day that Leslie had consented to become the happy bride of lord Mountvillars.

Mountvillars. Cecil, like the hare and many friends, in vain looked round for a refuge; all were ready to flirt with her; but none, not even colonel Clanmaurice, for whom she had cooled upon the little ensign, were willing to act up to the hopes they had excited.

It is not love that engages the silly and the vain to set their caps at each other—it is not love that leads them into a corner, to flirt out the time that intervenes between the dances. Rather say, it is the mutual predilection for distinction, the momentary fondness for the same follies. This is not love, but selfishness, the desire of being envied for the hour, in having appropriated a pretty piece of good, which they take the pains of persuading themselves others are ready to die for. Good looks, however, do not last for ever; and the *flirt* finds, too late, that she has squandered away her hours in administering to the vanity of others,

without the wisdom of securing one moment for herself.

Thus it was with poor Cecil Templemore; irritated against herself—irritated against the world, yet still seeking in that world the fulfilment of her desires. With no real feeling of happiness, she flies from one amusement to another, decorated by the kind hands of her sisters, and enabled by them to carry on a life of dissipation that is now her only pleasure—always restless, thirsting for something never to be attained, and advancing to that opprobrious animal, an *old maid*, with nothing to look back to but a life spent to little or no purpose, but to warn others by its example.

It is always a comfort to be able to attach *blame* somewhere, and Cecil readily tacks hers to the insufficiency of Brighton; and while hurrying forward through all its rounds of dissipation, with a velocity

city accelerated in proportion to the disappointment of the chase, her only solace is to abuse it with all her might, and to warn others from becoming devoted dupes to the emptiness of its enjoyments. To use a French idiom, however, it is but to beat the winds, and to waste her words: folly and fashion still flock in to this marketplace of beauty; and though sense and sobriety are driven out by their vagaries, it is a loss *gained*, for they can very well dispense with the croakings of austerity, and the cold water which sanctimonious affectation would cast upon their pleasures. Then

“ Long shalt thou laugh thine enemies to scorn,
Proud as Phœnicia, queen of watering-places !
Boys yet unbreech’d, and virgins yet unborn,
On thy bleak downs shall tan their blooming faces.”

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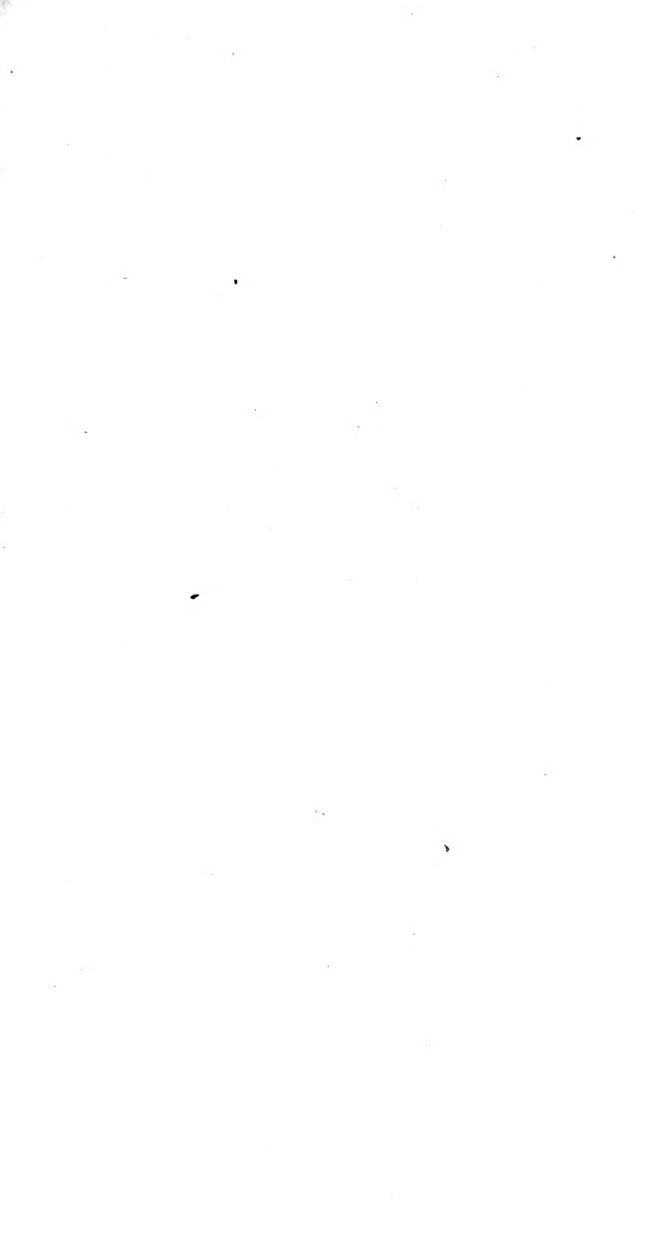
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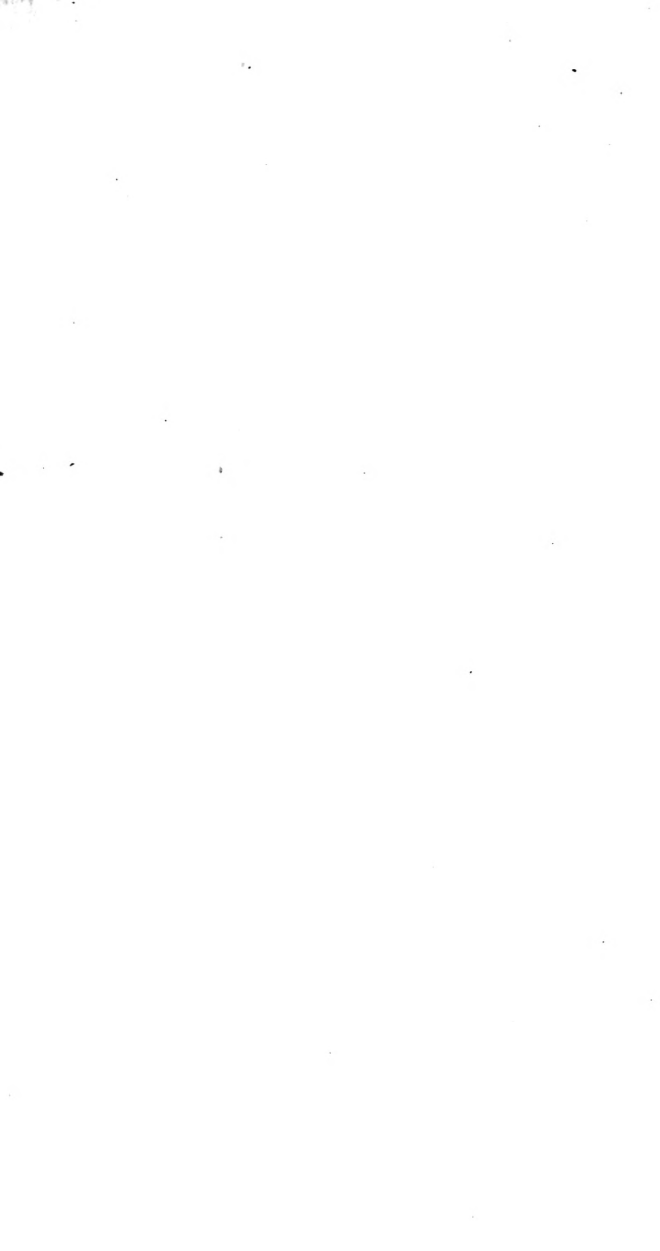
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